New Statesman

NINA HIBBIN
Back troubles

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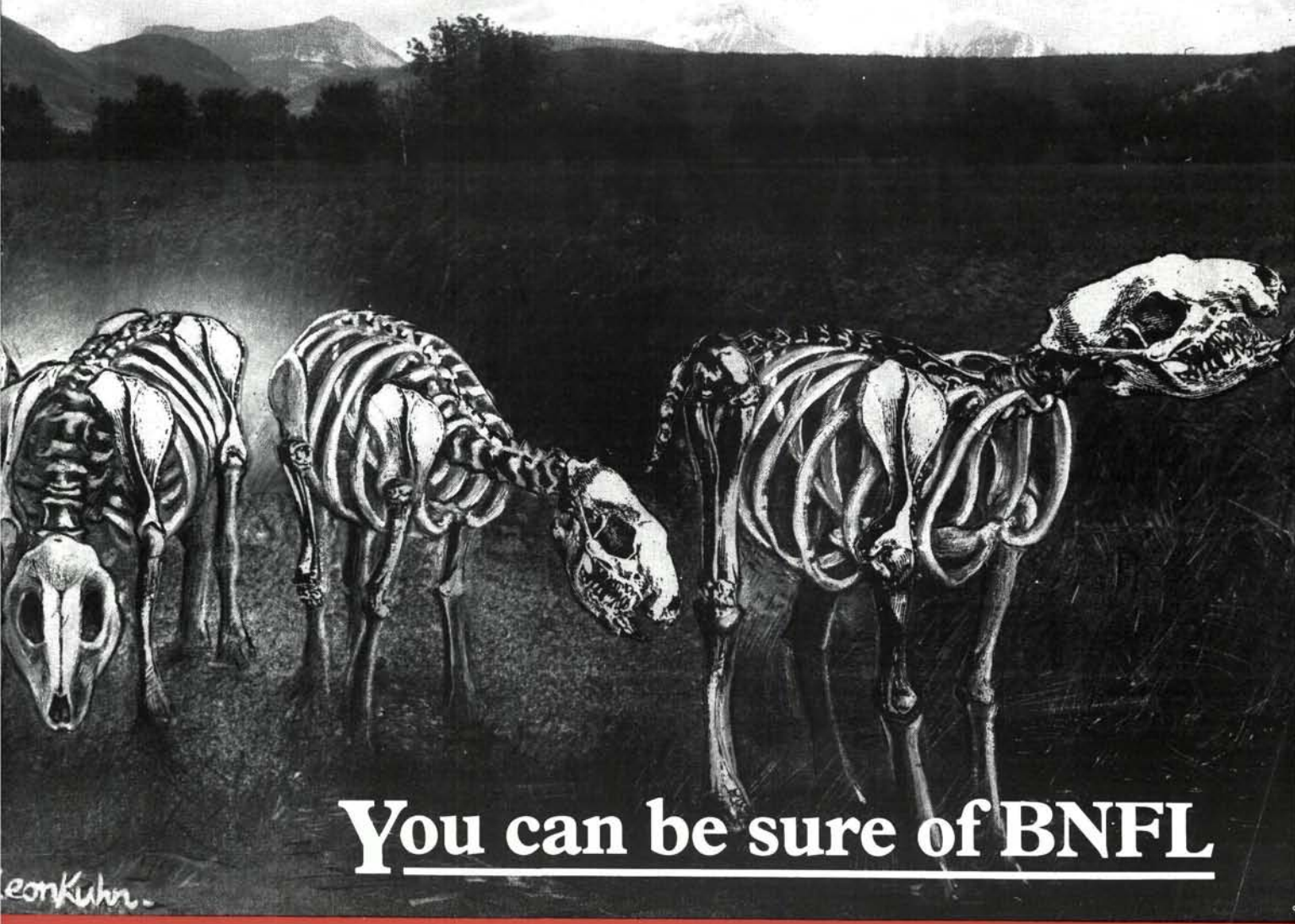
NUCLEAR WASTE



ANDREW TYLER: Opium for the masses

JUSTIN WINTLE: The form of Roland Barthes

SARAH BENTON: Militant's sound and fury

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GLC
Working for London

LONDON AGAINST RACISM

Ethnic minority employment prospects.

WHO CARES WHEN THE GLC GOES?

If you are from one of London's ethnic minority communities we don't have to spell out the problems you come up against when following up training and employment opportunities. Problems arising not just because London is hard hit by unemployment, but because all too often unfair discrimination plays its part in robbing you of an equal chance. If you are a woman or have a disability, a job with good pay and prospects can be even more elusive.

In the lifetime of this Council, the GLC has proved that positive action opens up job opportunities for people from all sections of our multi-racial community. Many young ethnic minority women and men joined GLC training schemes and there were significant increases in the number of black and Asian people employed in real jobs at all levels throughout the Council.

The departure of the GLC is an immense blow to the employment prospects of many. It does not, however, put an end to the work the Council has helped pioneer in bringing equality of opportunity within the reach of more and more people living in London.

For any person keen to work for London there are still many equal opportunities employers worth approaching. A growing number of organisations back their equal opportunities policy with positive action to ensure applicants for training places and job vacancies are treated equally regardless of race or sex. Some of London's local authorities, having looked at the composition of their workforces and identified areas of work where ethnic minorities are under-represented, set out to recruit in a positive way to redress this unfair imbalance.

This publication regularly carries a range of their job vacancy advertisements and is a good starting point.

It is also worth being fully aware of what your rights are, under the Sex Discrimination and Race Relations Acts for example. You can get this information from the concerned bodies such as the Equal Opportunities Commission or Commission for Racial Equality. Details of the special advice centres working in your community and able to help with training and employment problems should be obtainable from your local Council offices.

The future of equal opportunities in London for you and everyone else who suffers disadvantage can only benefit by the determination with which you pursue your right to work.

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New Statesman

Cover drawing: Leon Kuhn

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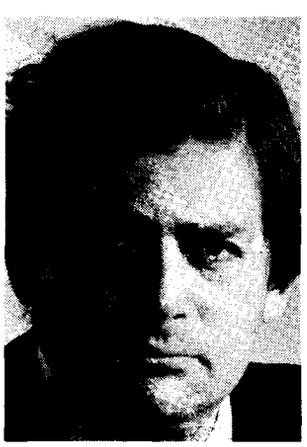
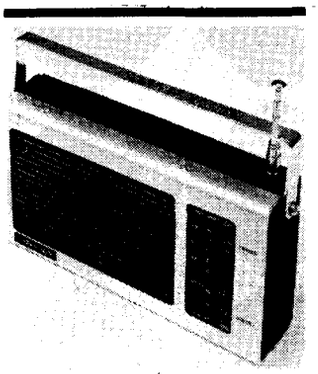


LAWSON'S FORK
Professor MAURICE PESTON analyses the increasingly limited options that face Chancellor Lawson as he puts the finishing touches to his 18 March budget

TEACHERS STRUGGLE ON
Teachers are finally resuming something like normal service. BARRY HUGILL wonders if they could have won more earlier had their unions shouted with one voice

NICARAGUA — HERE WE COME
LYNNE JONES marched for peace with 300 others through Central America. She describes the tensions, setbacks and successes.



DO DESIGNERS DESIGN?
Adrian Forty's *Objects of Desire* argues that manufactured goods look the way that they do largely because of social factors. STEPHEN BROOK takes issue

SMASH HIT
JON SAVAGE watches Siguesigue Sputnik's violent arrival in the top ten

New Statesman

Vol 111 No 2867 7 March 1986

Lessons from the death of Palme

SWEDEN (with Austria) is regularly held up as a model of how a European industrial society with a socialist government can perform better than our own. The assassination of Olof Palme, most probably on the basis of present evidence at the hands of the West German Red Army Faction, has removed from the world stage one of the few leading political figures of the Left who combined moral stature with political effectiveness. Palme's political successors have made it clear that they will not alter the open and democratic political style of a country where Socialists have been in government for all but six of the past 48 years.

The attractions of the Swedish model are obvious. The mixed economy there has been taken to its logical conclusion, with Socialist administrations accepting a vigorously prosperous private industrial and banking sector. (The dominance of the hundred-year-old Wallenburg family banking group, with its industrial interests including Scandinavian Airlines, Volvo and Saab, represents a concentration of financial power relative to the size of the Swedish economy that would run foul of anti-trust regulations in most other countries.) On the other side, on the back of one of the most prosperous economies in the world and high taxation, a welfare state has been constructed over the years that both in its scope and quality makes the United Kingdom appear very shabby indeed.

Such a model, however attractive, is of limited use to, say, British socialists because of the inherent differences between British and Swedish societies. The foremost of these is size. Sweden has a total population of under 8½ million. Over 1½ million Swedes live in Stockholm itself. This allows Swedish politics to have something of the enviable quality of the Greek city state. It is, of course, not the case that all Swedes are directly involved in a co-operative political process, but it is true that the Swedish political process is largely conducted by a relatively small group of people, who — Conservative, Socialist and Communist alike — know each other intimately and have been brought up together.

SWEDEN IS ALSO, in stark contrast to the United Kingdom, a relatively classless society. It has a monarchy and a clearly identifiable upper class, but in terms of education and professional or career patterns it is an infinitely more open society than our own. Children of the same family with the same education and qualifications quite normally, for example, make their careers as bankers or as trade union officials. The research departments of trade unions produce work that is fully as good as that of the employers with whom they are negotiating. The consequence of all these elements is that underlying the forms and institutions of Swedish political life — contested elections, industrial confrontation and the rest — there is a social cohesion and a basic consensus about national social and economic goals that certainly does not (and probably cannot) exist in larger European countries like France, West Germany and the United Kingdom. The tripartite corporate state — government, employer and organised labour — does not need to be created in Sweden in order to agreed and achieve national purposes. It exists automatically and informally.

But if, domestically, Swedish socialism à la Palme, is of limited

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On the right lines.

The massive electrification programme for the 400 mile East Coast Main Line has made a great start. The first phase to Peterborough is 5 months early, and passengers will be able to use this section from May 1987.

The project will be finished on time for May 1991. On completion it will give 20 million people faster, more reliable travel between London and Edinburgh.

New, sleek, high-speed locomotives called 'Electra' are being built to power the first electric trains between London and Leeds from 1989.

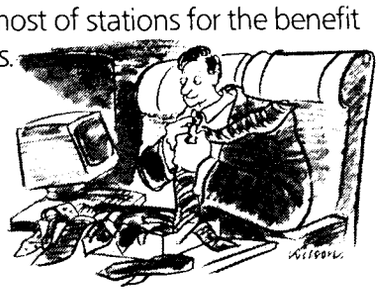
BR brings the High Street into the station.

'Action Stations' is BR's plan to bring more shops to the 300 million passengers who pass through their stations every year.

They can do their food shopping on their way home from work. Or buy a tie or flowers or a magazine while waiting for their train.

The Tie Rack, Le Croissant Shop, W. H. Smith and a wide range of specialist shops are already doing well at the big London stations like Paddington and Victoria.

It's all part of BR's commitment to making the most of stations for the benefit of passengers.



We're getting there.

relevance to us, the same is not true of Swedish foreign policy. Having long since sloughed off such colonial past as it had, Swedish foreign policy, particularly under Olof Palme, has developed a character and influence wholly behind the country's direct economic or military capacity.

Again the differences between Sweden and the United Kingdom are significant — Sweden is a non-nuclear neutral state, neither a member of NATO, nor the Common Market. But the basic characteristics of Sweden's foreign policy should commend themselves to a future socialist government in Britain. The pathetic illusions of continuing world power and influence in Washington that still seem to warp the judgement of all who move into No. 10 Downing Street must be shed once and for all by a future non-Thatcher government. We are a second rank European industrial nation. Our always exaggerated 'special relationship' with the United States is now entirely one sided.

With our past history and international connections we should, like Sweden, assert a moral dimension in international affairs, taking a lead in positive relations between North and South and in general disarmament and in the United Nations. It is in these things that Swedish influence has counted for more than British and it is for these things that Olof Palme will be primarily remembered. □

Cracks in the Ulster mould

THE HISTORY of Protestant politics in Northern Ireland over the years has been one of moderate leaders being progressively discredited and power passing to ever extremer figures. This week we have seen the Rev Ian Paisley under palpable pressure for the first time from the harder men who bounced him and the Official Unionist leader James Molyneaux into backing the call for the 24 hour strike in the province on Monday. Peter Robinson, deputy to Paisley as leader of the Democratic Unionists, and Harold McCusker, deputy to Molyneaux as leader of the Official Unionists, are emerging as the dominant forces in the '1986 Workers' Committee' that organised the strike.

The Royal Ulster Constabulary's role on Monday has come in for much obvious criticism. They made no concerted effort to stop Protestant paramilitaries establishing hundreds of road blocks and acting openly as vigilantes throughout Ulster. Their intelligence must have given them advance warning of the scale of what was being planned. Their failure or inability to act is a graphic demonstration of how fragile an operational concept law and order is in Ulster.

The RUC clearly should have acted to prevent harassment and destruction of property on Monday. It is not, though, right to criticise the RUC for its failure to neutralise what were in effect mass pickets trying to prevent others from going to work any more than it was right in 1984 to praise the mainland police for what they were doing to miners' pickets. Whether you like it or not, the Protestant strike on Monday was at base an expression of the views of the majority of the inhabitants of Ulster about the Anglo-Irish agreement. Those views cannot and should not be suppressed by police action. Political and social advance in Ulster will only come gradually and only by changing hearts and minds.

Here there is a ray of comfort from the events of this week. It is clear that the Protestant community is by no means solidly behind its more radical political leadership. For the moment, at least, there is clearly not universal Protestant support for a policy of making the province ungovernable. And it is equally clear that much Protestant opinion was alienated by the actions of the paramilitaries. It is much too early to claim that the mould of Irish politics has broken, but it is at last showing welcome signs of cracks. □

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Pacemaker

Ian Paisley MP, the initiative slipping out of his hands fast

DAY OF ACTION DISMAYS ULSTER'S CATHOLICS

FIONNUALA O CONNOR assesses the long-term implications of Monday's Unionist protest — and in particular the RUC's behaviour

'SUSPEND the Anglo-Irish process and we will talk,' Unionist politicians now say. But the Nationalists are beginning to ask whether the Anglo-Irish process is in fact over before it has begun. They note the way Tom King announced without comment last Tuesday that the next meeting of the Intergovernmental Conference had been postponed. And the events of Monday are making them consider how the institutions of the state which they were told increasingly deserved their allegiance — such as the RUC — have been reformed, or not, as the case may be.

Perhaps the self-confessed members of the UDA (Northern Ireland's biggest legal paramilitary group) blocking traffic outside Stormont's main gates last Monday, just a few feet from RUC landrovers, said it all. A mile up the driveway, inside Stormont, Tom King spent the morning on the air maintaining that the RUC were doing a splendid job in assisting citizens to go about their lawful business.

But the middle-aged UDA boss at the gates was just as complimentary about the police. 'They're not bothering us,' he grinned. It was true: the RUC impassively witnessed 30 cars being forced to stop, with immediate passage allowed only to those who showed their special strike passes. The UDA boss, well known to the police, offered contacts at the next road block who might be able to provide the passes. They were simple cards stamped with the red cross of St Patrick with the red hand of Ulster in the middle — an illustrative device more typical up to now of the Ulster nationalist/pro-independence paramilitary than the political parties.

Significantly however, the cards were signed by the East Belfast MP Peter Robinson, once known only as Ian Paisley's deputy, but now clearly the man to watch as pro-independence paramilitary hard men and politicians forge another alliance beyond the control of the nominal leaders.

Though in the immediate aftermath of Monday's strike attention was focussed on the failure of the police to clear the barricades, the long-term implications of the police behaviour remain to be spelled out. The nod-and-a-wink explanation being given is that it amounted to 'sensible policing' — a decision to cut losses where enforcement would have led to rioting. 'I'd hate to see the police refuse to get out of their landrovers altogether,' one officer commented ominously. A suggestion that last summer's re-routing of extremist Protestant Orange parades away from Catholic areas would not be repeated? Catholic nationalists who saw the RUC policy on parades as the first — indeed the *only* — concrete sign to date of benefits for them in the Anglo-Irish process, await the rescheduled Intergovernmental Conference — and the first Orange march of the season next month in the loyalist stronghold of Portadown. ●

Some creative interpretations of drugs law by the Met

A bill before the House of Commons, designed to make it easier to seize assets from drug-dealing, is due to become law shortly. But a current case shows that the Metropolitan police believe they already have the right to retain funds seized in evidence on a drugs-dealing charge — *even if it ends in acquittal*.

In December, David Lucas, a Kensington antiques dealer, was unanimously acquitted of possession with intent to supply cannabis. He pleaded guilty to a charge of simple possession of 90 grammes. The police, he claims, 'fantasised that I was a major supplier for West London with international connections.'

In the run up to the case the police chanced on a key in his pocket for a safety deposit box in Selfridges, which contained £36,000 in cash. Lucas explained that part of it was the fruits of commercial tax evasion. The police seized the money, with due authority, as evidence in the case. On his acquittal they refused to pay it back. Eventually he filed a writ for its return. The police's defence, also filed, is that the money amounts to the proceeds of drugs dealing and/or that is demanded by the Inland Revenue.

Lawyers agree that the law only allows the police to seize and retain the assets of a person believed to be a drugs dealer after an order from a judge on a police application after a conviction. Moreover it is up to the Inland Revenue to apply to make a formal claim for a share of someone's assets in someone else's hands when tax is legally due. It is not for one agency of the state to enforce another's rules.

The police's seizure of assets in cases of this kind, though it doesn't add up to a consistent pattern, has on occasion been cavalier. Howard Marks, in a 1981 case, was acquitted on a charge of conspiracy to smuggle dangerous drugs. The judge, with the prosecutor's compliance, refused to allow the return of the money seized as evidence, and refused to explain his refusal. Marks recovered it after legal proceedings. Bernard Simons, the solicitor who represented Marks, also recalls a heroin importation case when a client on conviction was fined and given three months to pay. The police assumed that the cash in their hands should be used to pay off the fine. The judge disagreed: the state didn't have an instantly enforceable right to keep money in its hands.

A sidelight on the Met's response to this case emerges from a telephone call to its press office, which claimed that the case was 'sub judice'. In fact the provisions of the 1981 contempt of court act mean that 'sub judice' rules only apply (in civil cases) when they are set down for trial. Either the Met misunderstands the law, or like many people, they use the 'sub judice' formula as a convenient fiction — a grander alternative to 'no comment'.

Robert Silver

Vote Labour for a left-wing Tory party

IF LABOUR does well at the next election, the Tory party in the Commons will swing to the left, whereas if the Liberal/SDP Alliance does well it will move to the right. Our analysis of data on Tory MPs' ideology compiled by parliamentary specialist Andy Roth shows that Tory seats vulnerable to Labour tend to be held by rightwingers, while those vulnerable to the Alliance tend to be held by 'wets'.

This doesn't affect who the next Tory leader will be, partly because Labour and Alliance gains will cancel each other out, and partly because the dominant grouping among Conservative MPs is composed of those classified as 'centrist', who will choose Mrs Thatcher's successor on purely pragmatic grounds. This must make either Howe (the right wing's compromise candidate) or Hurd (the left wing's compromise candidate) the front runners.

The other findings are that the 'Labour marginal effect' is confined to *very* marginal seats; safer MPs, and MPs not standing again, reflect the political composition of the parliamentary party as a whole.

Tory MPs

Numbers losing their seats on 7½% swing to

	Labour	Alliance	Nationalists
Left	12	11	3
Centre	38	22	2
Right	25	3	0

MPs have been classified as 'left' or 'right' if they are rebellious or self-advertised as such ('centre' includes unknowns and closet wets), with economics taking priority over social issues. This is consistent, but results in some strange classifications. Viscount Cranborne, who opposed Rhodesian sanctions and voted for hanging and rugby with South Africa, is classed as 'left' because he thinks monetarism is unbenevolent.

John Rentoul

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UNIONS ABANDON THE ADDENBROOKES STRIKERS

SEVENTEEN months after the domestics at Addenbrooke's hospital in Cambridge went on strike, both health service unions have decided to cease supporting the pickets. AMRIT WILSON reports on the latest moves in the interminable struggle

THE STRIKERS are fighting not only for better wages and working conditions, but for cleanliness and better patient care at the hospital. Despite being abandoned last week by NUPE and COHSE, they are determined to stay out on strike — dependent now on individual supporters and some non-NHS unions and union branches.

In October 1984, OCS Hospital Cleaning Services won the Addenbrookes cleaning contract. They reduced the number of hours of domestic work from 21 hours a day to 11 hours for a typical ward, slashed wages and holidays and abolished sick pay. Acording to Tessa Howe who worked at Addenbrookes for 12 years till the strike, work had consisted not only of cleaning but of being a part of a team which cared for patients — giving them their tea and buttering their bread if they were unable to, and generally helping them. 'Fifty per cent of the job had always been muck,' she says, 'OCS took the rest away'. Since OCS took over, bone splinters have twice been found on the operating theatre floor.

The official reason for COHSE's withdrawal of support (NUPE merely followed suit) was that 'there was nothing more we could achieve . . . a settlement had been offered at the last ACAS meeting [in October last year] with jobs for everyone.' In fact these jobs — mainly ancilliary work at Fulbourn Mental Hospital and a few non-domestic jobs at Addenbrookes — had been unanimously rejected by the pickets. Sylvia Barton, COHSE branch chair for Addenbrookes says: 'We did not stand outside the hospital for 17 months for these jobs. Addenbrookes is still dirty and still needs domestics'. As a final irony, the day the unions stopped strike pay the Health Advisory Service, an independent national body reporting to the DHSS on services for the elderly and mentally ill, found that Addenbrookes had dirty geriatric wards with dirty crockery and cleaning materials left lying around.

Increasing divisions

As the strike progressed, relations between the strikers and national unions became increasingly strained. According to the women on the picket line: 'The union leadership were never sure whether they wanted to defend the Health Service or aim propaganda at the government . . . at one point there were four long-running hospital picket lines at Barking, Chesterfield, Oxford and Addenbrookes, but the leadership refused to co-ordinate any kind of national industrial action'. Roger Poole, a NUPE national officer, responded to this criticism — just before withdrawing support — by saying: 'Health authorities in different parts of the country are at different stages of privatisation and members in different parts of the country may not want to take part in action, so all we can do is act locally'. But according to Martin Booth, NUPE's branch secretary at Addenbrookes, such local action has consisted of taking on the Health Authority. 'That is useless since you are fighting the government and government policy — Health Authorities are working within cash limits.' ●

Graphic Connections/Report

The historical perspective: leafleting back in October 1984

Writer's deportation

Margaret Randall, a leading North American writer on things feminist and Latin American is facing deportation — from her own country. Randall gave up her US citizenship in 1967 after marrying a Mexican but two years ago applied for residency in the US. Immigration officials have made no bones about the reason they want to deport her — after asking questions which filled more than 40 pages of transcript and combing her material they concluded: 'Her writings go far beyond mere dissent, disagreement with, or criticism of the US or its policies.' So much for the First Amendment and freedom of speech.

Jane Dibblin

More museums intent on financial suicide

ALTHOUGH the 'voluntary donations' at the Victoria and Albert museum have proved a disaster, three more national museums announced last week their intention to introduce compulsory admission charges from 1 April 1987. But the available evidence is that charging at the Zoological Museum (Tring, Herts), and the Natural History and Geological Museums (South Kensington, London) will prove no more successful that the V&A's donations.

The fear is that the Science Museum will soon follow the others' lead, though its new Director, Neil Cossons, has indicated to Norman Buchan, Labour's arts spokesperson, that he personally would be opposed to such a move.

Since the V&A introduced donations in November 1985, the number of visitors to the museum has plummented from 157,418 in January to only 66,602 in December. The whole enterprise has been a financial non-starter: staff implement the charges scheme half-heartedly, the public stays away, and the revenue generated from donations more or less balances the revenue lost from sales of souvenirs and refeshments.

The V&A insists that these are teething troubles, and blames the loss of visitors on the major renovations underway at the museum, the 'unexpected' campaign by the civil service unions against the charges, and only lastly the charges themselves. Signs of desperation are, however, visible: in the autumn Saatchi and Saatchi will be launching a major advertising campaign to promote the museum'.

But why are the other museums so keen to follow the V&A over the cliff? They argue that the shortfall in government funding (£1.5 million in 1986) gives them no option but to charge, and to cut staffing levels too. The Office of Arts and Libraries (OAL) implausibly claims that the government is neutral on charging, even though last year Lord Gowrie, while Arts Minister, argued that charges helped 'sharpen appreciation', while an OAL spokesman claimed that those independent museums that charge, 'possess a marketing tool that the other lack.'

It's true that independent museums — such as the industrial museum at Ironbridge in Shropshire — have managed to make money and attract the punters. But such museums tend to have a definite 'single image' appeal suited to a 'day out'. A permanent collection such as the V&A's, or the Natural History Museum's, is by definition eclectic, and therefore particularly unsuited to charges, as Buchan points out. It is heartening that Cossons — who many feared to be the harbinger of charges at the Science Museum, having introduced them at the National Maritime Museum — agrees with him.

Jane Jarley

Another MP has nuclear troubles

THE LEAK of 13 tonnes of radioactive carbon dioxide from the ancient Trawsfynydd nuclear power station two weeks ago is trailing noxious political fallout over the North Wales heartlands.

In 12 years on parliament, Dafydd Elis Thomas, whose spreading Meirionnydd Nany Conwy constituency includes the leaky station, has never faced more conflicting pulls.

His instincts urge him to call for its closure until the filter system which failed so miserably is given a clean bill of health. But the station employs 600 people in an area where one in five people queue for the dole. Jobs are precious and zealously guarded, and any suggestion of killing them off would be suicidal — as Jack Cunningham in his Sellafield constituency knows.

The SDP, which has hopes of winning the seat, is trying to take advantage of Thomas's discomfiture, and has started a whispering campaign, attacking him for allegedly not caring whether the Trawsfynydd jobs are put at risk.

Many on the Left outside the nationalist movement support Thomas in preference to joining a constituency Labour party dominated by the Right. They are pressing him to put principle before expediency. While the MP agonises and the CEGB prepares its report on the leak, public opinion is beginning to rock an unstable fence.

Tony Heath

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SOME ANSWERS TO NORMAN TEBBIT'S QUESTIONS

THE ONLY credible explanation for last week's Tory 'lightning bird' party political broadcast is that they thought nobody would watch it. For those readers who missed this classic piece of disinformation, and for those who want to savour it again, we print here an abridged version — with answers to some of the questions it poses.

SINCERE VOICE: Why has this government felt it so necessary to start almost — as it were — from scratch? Why has it been prepared to work so hard, at doing things that are so difficult?

Why has it battled to bring strikes down to their lowest figures for almost 50 years? It hasn't: it engineered the miners' strike, which meant that in 1984 more working days were lost through strikes (27.1 million) than since 1979 (29.5 million), which in turn was the highest since the General Strike (162 million). The *number* of disputes was, it is true, the lowest since 1936 — if you count the miners' strike as one dispute.

Lies . . .

Why has it put so much emphasis on a return to law and order? A nice example of newspeak: If you conspicuously fail to fulfil your pledges, you can at least boast that you 'emphasised' them.

Why has it worked so hard to bring inflation down to around 5 per cent — a figure we hadn't dreamed of for almost twenty years? Britain has in fact been less successful in curbing inflation than all but one of our partners in the Group of 7 (the world's seven major industrial economies). Only Italy is projected by the OECD to have a higher inflation rate than Britain this year.

Why has it believed it worth taking on all the Labour councils who love being landlords and — against their opposition — won the right for every council house family to buy its own home? Even the DoE's figures admit that the number of homeless families placed by councils in bed and breakfast — because the government won't allow more council houses to be built — has risen fourfold since 1978. The true figure is almost certainly higher.

Damned lies . . .

Why has it fought for the right of parents to choose their children's schools? It's true that since the 1981 Education Act parents have had the right to appeal against local authority decisions about which school their children go to. This was a wholly uncontroversial piece of legislation made possible by falling school rolls. Some 'fight'.

Why is it spending another £388 million on special aid for our cities? Because it has removed over £17 billion in rate support grant — which has hit the cities hardest.

And Tory party . . .

And why is it spending another 20 per cent more on our health service — that's 20 per cent more even after allowing for inflation — than did the last Labour government? Even the government admits that it needed to spend 1.2 per cent more each year — after allowing for inflation — to keep up with the birth rate, the number of old people and new technology, *and* wages in the NHS have gone up by more than inflation, and make up two-thirds of its costs.

Why has it added over 58,000 more nurses and midwives, and over 10,000 more doctors and dentists to the NHS? Because the standard working week was cut by 6 per cent in 1980, so numbers of 'full-time equivalents' went up by 12,000. Much of the rest of the increase is accounted for by the extra work needed to keep up with the rising number of old people.

Why has it completed 58 hospital building projects each worth at least £2 million? Because the last Labour government set up a system for bringing the standard of health care in the North and West up to that in the South East. This has been corrupted by the Tories, who are building a few hospitals in the north and West, but are 'levelling down' the health service in the South East to the average, closing at least 221 hospitals.

. . . commercials

Why has it pushed ahead with free enterprise — and worked away to create in Britain the fastest growing economy in the EEC? Last year Britain *was* the fastest growing economy — but this year is likely to be different. Britain's economy is projected to grow about half a per cent more slowly than the average for the EEC, and to be the slowest growing economy among the Group of Seven.

. . . And, what *we* want to know is: why does a party that backs Britain go to Tanzania — a Popular Socialist state — to make its commercials?

For more information about the Conservative Party, contact Norman Tebbit, Conservative Central Office, 32 Smith Square, London SW1.

Patrick Forbes and Jolyon Jenkins

Diplomatic niceties

When Margaret Thatcher was smarming up to the odious Turkish Prime Minister Ozal during his official visit to Britain last month, she chose to quote, in her speech at the Downing Street dinner, from an 1810 letter by Lord Byron to a friend. Her quotation ran thus: 'I see not much difference between ourselves and the Turks, save that they have long dresses and we short; and we talk much and they little . . . They are *sensible* people.' For some inexplicable reason the Prime Minister left out the couple of sentences in the middle. So, for the record, here they are. 'In England the vices in fashion are whoring and drinking, in Turkey sodomy and smoking. we prefer a girl and a bottle; they pipe and a pathic. They are *sensible* people.' [Ed. Pathic: Obsolete. A boy kept for homosexual purposes.]

Harris mole wanted

Someone's paid opinion pollsters Harris to ask electricity workers what they think of being privatised. Harris say the survey covers other public sector workers too, but won't say who their client is. It's reminiscent of the regular polls carried out by the Coal Board during the coal strike, but the CEGB and Electricity Council say it wasn't them, nor did they contribute to a joint project, nor have they made union subscription check-off information available. (The unions are mystified as to how Harris got hold of members' home addresses.) 'It wasn't us,' says the Energy Department. 'Nor us,' says Tory Central Office. So who wants to know?

You read it here first

Do not be surprised if, when the alleged perpetrators of the alleged Johnson Matthey gold swindle come to trial, they turn out to be *New Statesman* readers. Ex-*NS* columnist John McVicar exposed the fiddle in our issue of 31 December 1982, and, incidentally, gave the most lucid explanation of how it works that has so far appeared. You buy the gold for cash in somewhere like Zurich, he explained, and then import it to Britain. You tell the customs it's for re-export, so you don't pay any VAT.

Then you take it to a dealer. One of the McVicar's underworld friends continued: 'The dealer pays you the price of the gold plus 15 per cent VAT; he claims it off the VAT; and the VAT claims it back off you — except by that time you're on the missing list or trading under a different name. You invariably given 'em your business card — B. Bloggs, precious metal dealer with the address of your 30 quid a week office on it — but it's the VAT certificate that does the trick.' How do you get the VAT certificate? 'You go down your local VAT office, tell the geezer "I'm Mr So-and-So, I'm a dealer in precious metals and I want to start trading tomorrow." As soon as you say that they can't give you a VAT number quick enough. They want you to pay their VAT; they think "GOTCHA".'

It was not ever thus

The picture of Daily Telegraph *editor-elect — as presented in the* Observer*'s profile last Sunday — concentrated on Max Hastings' charming blend of reactionary opinions and fogeyish practices. It omitted to mention that, once upon a time, the Falklands hero had taken a very different view of the world. According to a yellowing copy of the* Times Literary Supplement *(30 January 1969), the then keenly-cub reporter was clearly 'bitterly hostile to the American police' and 'horrified by the exaggerated panic of the whites' faced by the uprisings in the American ghettoes. These unseemingly radical opinions were expressed in Hastings's book* America 1968: The Fire this Time.

Black clouds

Yes, the outlook is grim for *Daily Telegraph* employees. News reaches us from Canada of the antics of Conrad Black, the paper's new proprietor. In January he unilaterally removed $62 million from the pension fund of Dominion Stores Ltd, which he also owns. At the same time he claimed that his employees had been stealing $30 million worth of goods every week from his supermarkets, and used this to justify the laying off of hundreds of employees: 'Losing a job is a sad thing,' he said, 'but it's sometimes difficult for me to work myself into an absolute lachrymose fit about the work force that steals on that scale . . . we are not running a welfare agency for corrupt union leaders and a slovenly work force.' Bob Rae, leader of Canada's New Democratic Party, said — with admirable restraint — that Mr Black was 'that most symbolic representative of bloated capitalism at its worst.' Two weeks later Dominion Stores gave a half-hearted apology to its workers, but the implication is clear: *Telegraph* writers had better start buying their own Tipp-Ex.

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SCRUTINY

Duncan Campbell and Patrick Forbes

1985: A BUMPER BUNKER YEAR

Underground bunkers and 'hardened' war facilities have become one of the major industrial growth areas of the 1980s. The bunker boom is the result of expanded plans for 'home defence' introduced by Mrs Thatcher in 1979

A *New Statesman* survey found that, in the last year, at least a dozen new government war installations came into service, mostly in secret.

These include four new Home Office civil defence 'zone headquarters', five RAF and two Army bunkers, and a major NATO headquarters. The Northern Ireland Office, which has been lagging in the bunker race, has announced that it too will start constructing three new bunkers for its officials.

During 1985, the Home Office completed two new underground Zone Headquarters (ZHQs) at Chilmark, Wiltshire, and at Skendelby, Lincolnshire. Two other ZHQs have also been built inside disused Second World War meat stores, at Loughborough, Leicestershire, and Hexham, Northumberland. Each ZHQ houses about 180 officials, and controls three or four counties.

But two Home Office bunkers have closed, unable to withstand the ravages of even the peacetime British climate. Bunker ZHQ10/2, secretly built in the 1960s below public offices in Southport, has been written off. Supposedly designed to resist an atomic explosion a mile away, it has been flooded and wholly unusable for at least six years.

Another Home Office bunker, ZHQ6/1 beneath Dover Castle, has also been abandoned. In a parliamentary answer to Tony Banks MP, the Home Office said this week that the Dover bunker 'could not be refurbished at an economic cost'. (But the real reason was probably that it is was unlikely to have been of any use, as Dover is a top priority nuclear target.)

The Dover ZHQ became well-known in the 1960s as one of the chain of 'Regional Seats of Government' (RSGs) revealed during the 1963 CND Aldermaston march. A group called 'Spies for Peace' revealed the existence of 12 underground RSGs. The Aldermaston march then diverted to the Berkshire hamlet of Warren Row, where RSG6 had been secretly built in underground tunnels. Six years after this international *exposeé*, the bunker was closed, and abandoned to rats during the 1970s.

Recently re-equipped with communications and generators, Warren Row is implausibly claimed by the Ministry of Defence to be a Territorial Army 'training centre'. It was observed to be under armed guard during last year's home defence exercise, Brave Defender. Warren Row probably now serves as the wartime military 'Armed Forces Headquarters' (AFHQ) for the Home Counties.

Three miles from Warren Row, the MoD has also taken back the use of another WW2 underground factory. Hidden in twin tunnels in a wooded hillside south of Henley-on-Thames, is a bunker which had been given back to peaceful industrial use for a quarter century.

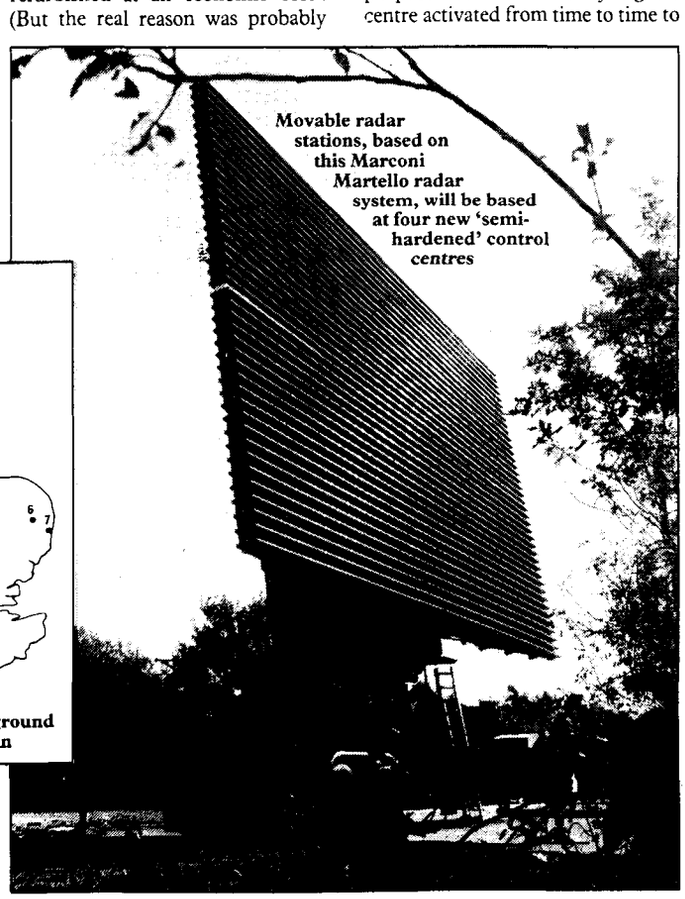
A small engineering firm which used the factory has had to surrender its lease to the Defence Ministry. A small plaque outside now reads 'RSSD' (Reserve Sub-storage Depot). But the Defence Ministry admitted last month that its real purpose was to be an Army 'signals centre activated from time to time to practice the war role'.

The Royal Air Force, meanwhile, had been constructing a chain of 'semi-hardened' sites for the new 'UKADGE' (UK Air Defence Ground Environment) radar system. Five of the new sites will be the home of mobile RAF radar stations, a new feature of the UKADGE system (see below). Three of these sites have been identified, at Hopton and Trimingham in East Anglia, and at Tranwell near Morpeth. Holmpton, near Hull, may be a fourth site.

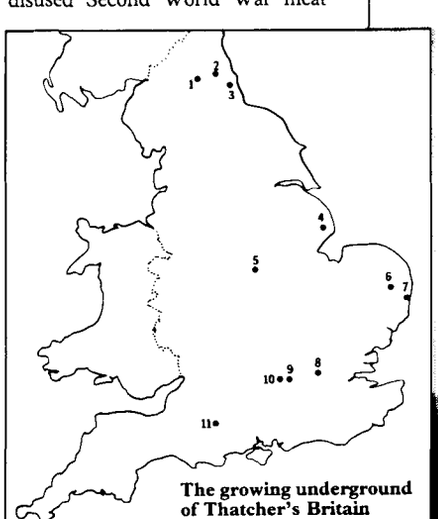
But a new top-security defence site, which the Ministry of Defence says is *not* part of its new radar system, is causing considerable concern in the Newcastle area. This is a so-called 'secure vehicle compound', which will be built alongside an existing Army bunker at Ouston, south of Newcastle.

Security measures planned for the compound are extremely high, and include a double layer of weldmesh fencing, like that installed at the Molesworth cruise missile base — and, allegedly, concrete machine gun emplacements. These plans have provoked local fears that the site may become a cruise missile convoy dispersal base.

Ouston, however, is far beyond the normal operating range of cruise missile convoys based from existing bases in the south of England. Since the Ministry of Defence will not state the purpose of the vehicle compound, it is impossible to refute local speculation that Ouston may be a third, reserve British cruise missile base. ●



Movable radar stations, based on this Marconi Martello radar system, will be based at four new 'semi-hardened' control centres



The growing underground of Thatcher's Britain

1. *Hexham* 2. *Tramwell* 3. *Ouston*
4. *Skendleby* 5. *Loughborough*
6. *Trimingham* 7. *Hopton*
8. *Northwood* 9. *Warren Row*
10. *Henley* 11. *Chilmark*

New computer for MI5?

Secrecy still shrouds a new intelligence computer which Defence Minister Norman Lamont admitted this week was installed 'in central London' two years ago. The computer adds to an increasingly integrated — and threatening — central government network.

Information about the new computer first appeared in an official list published by the Central Computer and Telecommunications Agency, which said that the Ministry of Defence had ordered an 'ICL processor' in January 1984, to operate a 'database'. Ironically, the very vagueness of the description drew attention to it.

MoD officials at first claimed 'it's not one of ours'. But this week Lamont, in reply to a question from Jeremy Corbyn MP, said the computer had been installed in February 1984 'to provide bureau facilities to certain MoD HQ staff'.

The ministry remains reticent, its press officers saying that even they had not been allowed to share the secret of 'who uses that particular computer'. Manufacturers ICL also refused to discuss the deal on the grounds that 'we're not empowered to talk about it'. ●

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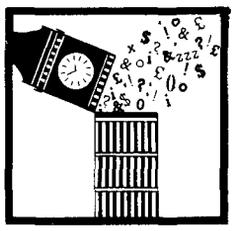

A plain socialist's guide to Kinnock versus Militant

CHERYL VARLEY is 25, student sabbatical organiser for the National Union of Students, and one of the 16 Liverpool Militants who face expulsion from the Labour Party. Last Thursday Ms Varley rang in to the Brian Hayes phone-in programme on LBC (London's news radio station). As I was the studio guest, listeners will have heard the two of us arguing about Militant.

Boiled down to essentials — and it is remarkable how little the verbiage of Militant does boil down to — Ms Varley's case rested on three points: 1. The whole anti-Militant exercise is a witch-hunt got up by Labour's right-wing; 2. The evidence against the Liverpool Militants is mere tittle-tattle; 3. It is wrong to kick 'good socialists' out of the Labour Party.

As a diligent seeker after truth and reason I asked Ms Varley, and other Militant supporters who telephoned in, whether anyone should ever be expelled from the Labour Party for breaking its rules — or should party members be able to ignore its constitution, regardless. Answer came there none. At least that's my version of the programme; doubtless Militant will publish its version, if its 'editorial board' disagrees with mine. It usually does.

Ms Varley's propositions 1 and 3 can be dealt with swiftly. One of the signatories of the national executive's majority report was Tom Sawyer; their supporters at last week's included David Blunkett. It is only possible for Militant to sustain its 'right-wing witch-hunt' point if it claims that Sawyer and Blunkett are either stupid left-wingers or secret right-wingers. Since either description is manifestly absurd, a third possibility must at least be considered; that anti-Militant feelings are shared by a far wider group of people than the far Left is ready to admit.

Proposition 3 is defective for the reason implied by my unanswered question on LBC: a blind eye may — arguably should — be turned to minor infringements of Labour's rules. Tolerance ought to be one of the party's main virtues. But if Labour's constitution is transgressed continuously, grotesquely and cynically, then the offenders have no right to be regarded as 'good socialists', let alone as legitimate party members.

The central plank of Militant's defence therefore rests on proposition 2: that the inquiry into Liverpool found no hard evidence of serious malpractice; that minor infringements were embroidered by 'tittle-tattle'; that, in short, the inquiry team was hoodwinked by Militant's opponents. The heart of the matter is not ideological but empirical. Are the observations that the inquiry team made about Liverpool's Labour Party correct or not?

Unfortunately, the team's report has not been published. However, it has been circulated sufficiently widely to be a public document for all intents and purposes. These are some of the team's findings, in its own words:

● 'The timing and venues of the meetings [of the Liverpool District Labour Party's Executive Committee] were altered from meeting to meeting . . . the notice given sometimes being only hours before the meeting was to commence . . . Notification of aggregate meetings . . . was done through the "grapevine" rather than by any formal mechanism.'

PETER KELLNER

● 'There were a significant number of members who claimed that at DLP meetings . . . there was a general air of intimidation; that verbal intimidation was rife; and that there were threats and acts of physical intimidation . . . The presence of uniformed security guards in the employ of the city council at Labour Party meetings could be a cause for concern.'

● 'Queries about access to DLP meetings and confusion between visitors and delegates add up to serious charges of constitutional and organisational breaches of standing orders and rules at the DLP.'

● For council elections, the DLP established a 'supplementary panel, it being alleged that those persons on the supplementary panel were debarred from fighting safe or winnable seats . . . The criteria for being placed on the supplementary panel no longer related to experience but to the nominee's political stance. The District Labour Party have constantly been informed by the Regional Office of this unconstitutional position, but have openly refused to discontinue this practice.'

● 'Race Relations Adviser. This . . . concerns a person alleged to be a Militant Tendency supporter. The appointment has led to a breakdown of relationships between the Council and the black community leaders whom they had hitherto accepted as authentic representatives of the black community.'

● 'It seems beyond reasonable doubt that too much power has become concentrated in the Executive Committee of the DLP . . . This concentration of power and decision making is largely dominated by the organisation of the Militant Tendancy . . . with a clear distinction between "supporters" and "members" and with a structure which broadly parallels the Labour Party structure.'

AND SO ON. If the 16 Militants who have been invited to appear before Labour's executive next week are proved to be guilty of organising, or conspiring to organise, these practices, they should clearly be expelled.

But the burden of proof remains with the executive. The inquiry team's report amounts to a charge sheet without the evidence. That evidence will need to be presented to the executive next week if the moral — let alone legal — requirements of natural justice are to be met. Specifically, evidence will need to be submitted to show that the 16 are on the wrong side of the line separating Militant 'members' from 'supporters'.

When this messy business is over, what then? Part of Neil Kinnock's problem is that 'democratic socialism' is still little more than a label describing the goodies as they fight the baddies. If the complaint against Militant is that they organise dictatorially to promote undesirable ideas, what organisations and which ideas should 'democratic socialists' put in their place?

One starting point is that democratic socialism should be a process as well as an objective. That is, it should involve the rigorous application of democratic, and only democratic, procedures. An expansion of one-member-one-vote would kill Militant and promote democratic socialism faster and more surely than any number of expulsions.

But Labour's leadership also needs a coherent programme that amounts to something more than a list of worthy policies to pull Britain out of recession. A year ago Kinnock's office started working with the Research Department at Walworth Road to produce a statement of democratic socialist principles. It should have been unveiled at Bournemouth last September. Instead it has disappeared from view. My team of sleuths last saw a 10,000 word document in a comatose condition on the desk of Geoff Bish, the party's director of research.

It should be revived, cut to 2,000 words and published. With the investigation of Militant of Liverpool we have a clearer idea of what we are against; what party members now need is something to fight *for*. □

PS. A gremlin crept into last week's PS. It should have reported Gallup finding that 81 per cent say it is important to 'increase public spending to reduce *unemployment*', while 49 per cent think it is important to 'cut down public spending to reduce inflation'. The essential point remains: at least 30 per cent of the public support *both* propositions.

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I ♥ NUCLEAR POWER (BUT NOT IN MY BACK YARD)

Emotion rules the day in arguments about how to treat nuclear waste. ROB EDWARDS looks at the — totally rational — reasons why reprocessing is a mug's game

POLITICAL ARGUMENTS provoked by the recent clutch of controversies about nuclear power have begun to look little more than tawdry wars of weasel words. Politicians across the whole spectrum are striving to outdo each other in the nuclear hypocrisy stakes.

The aim is to appear concerned about accidents at Sellafield, or nuclear waste dumping sites, without actually conceding any ground on how nuclear waste should be treated. The tactic is to give loud voice to some superficial criticisms of the nuclear industry but always, if pushed, to fall back on the kind of unthinking support for nuclear electricity that has cushioned it from the real world for decades.

Thus the government's Environment Minister, Kenneth Baker, his Labour Shadow, Dr John Cunningham and the SDP's forgettable spokesperson, John Cartwright, all sound virtually the same. They criticise management at Sellafield, urge it to produce a better image, call for varying types of public scrutiny, but refuse to countenance any radical surgery. They turn as one on environmental groups, accusing them of exaggeration, distortion and alarmism. Only the Liberals (who have called for the suspension of reprocessing at Sellafield) and the ineffectual Green Party emerge with any credit for consistency. But as civil and military 'nuclear' power is the only issue of substance which divides SDP and Liberal policies, the Alliance itself cannot speak with one voice.

Cunningham has infuriated Labour activists with his cavalier dismissal of the anti-nuclear power resolution agreed by last year's Labour Party Conference. There is particular anxiety about his conflicting roles as MP for the constituency that includes Sellafield (Copeland) and as the Party's environment spokesperson. If Labour is attempting to use its environmental policies to garner the Green vote, as every party is now trying to do, he is singularly unsuited to the task.

But according to one anti-nuclear insider, to bay for Cunningham's blood, as the left-wing Labour Co-ordinating Committee has done, is counter productive. 'Cunningham has made it a macho issue of Left versus Right' he said. 'I don't think Kinnock was ever likely to move him, but now he is even less likely to do so.' Kinnock would have been wiser not to force this conflict of interest on him in the first place.

The first prize for hypocrisy however has to go to the Government Chief Whip, John Wakeham. He strongly attacked last week's announcement that one of the four shortlisted sites for the burial of low and intermediate level radioactive waste is at Bradwell in his Essex constituency (the other three are at Elstow in Bedforshire, Fulbeck in Lincolnshire and South Killingholme on Humberside). He simultaneously made clear his belief that all waste disposal options should be properly examined and expressed unalloyed support for the government's nuclear expansion plans. It would be hard to find a more classic and indefensible example of the NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) syndrome.

BUT BEHIND ALL this insincere posturing, something important and unprecedented is happening. Events are conspiring to create a crisis of public confidence undreamt of by even the most optimistic anti-nuclear activists. The constant stream of leaks from Sellafield, the clumsily-timed announcement on waste burial sites and a series of other well-publicised nuclear incidents and revelations have progressively undermined the credibility of the entire nuclear industry.

The worst may be yet to come. The House of Commons Environment Select Committee is due to publish its reportedly damning analysis of nuclear waste policy next week. The danger is that, amidst all the hullabaloo, the real political choices will get blurred.

Inevitably, controversy has focused on the massive nuclear fuel reprocessing complex at Sellafield in Cumbria, the heart of Britain's nuclear industry. It receives highly radioactive spent fuel from nuclear power stations in Britain and abroad and, using a chemical process, separates it into three main ingredients: unused uranium, plutonium and nuclear waste. It has always been seen by the industry in this country as a crucial part of the nuclear fuel cycle.

So is reprocessing nuclear fuel an economic or useful thing to do in the first place? Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace have long argued that there is nothing to be gained from the operation and a great deal to be lost. It is the dirtiest part of the fuel cycle, endangering workers and the public with its relatively high accidental and routine emissions. Far from easing the problem of nuclear waste disposal, it augments it.

According to Friends of the Earth (FOE), reprocessing increases the volume of nuclear waste to be disposed of over 160 times. Without reprocessing, the British nuclear industry would produce 65,000 cubic metres of low level waste by the end of the century: with reprocessing it would produce 770,000 cubic metres. The comparable figures for intermediate level waste are 7,500 cubic metres without reprocessing and 59,000 cubic metres with. Thus, while reprocessing produces usable uranium and plutonium, it does not solve the problem of waste.

FOE's energy campaigner, Stewart Boyle, argues that if reprocessing were phased out there would be no need to look for new nuclear waste dumps. Spent fuel could be indefinitely stored at Sellafield and at existing nuclear station sites in newly built dry stores. The industry says that there would be corrosion problems with the fuel from the first generation Magnox reactors. FOE points out that unreprocessed Magnox fuel has been

Both photos: Camera Press

'Gi's a break, John'. Johns Wakeham (above) and Cunningham, neck and neck in the race for hypocrisy

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It happened to Karen Silkwood (immortalised by the face of Meryl Streep). Now everyone wonders who's next . . .

successfully stored in dry conditions at the Wylfa nuclear station in Wales.

For perhaps the first time the case against reprocessing in Britain is being taken seriously. The Select Committee report is expected to question seriously the wisdom of the practice and to recommend that the need for it be reassessed. Environmentalists now regard its abandonment as something more than a vain hope.

Despite the claims of Dr Cunningham and others, a strategy to phase out reprocessing is not the same as 'closing Sellafield' and putting all its 11,000 staff out of work. In effect it means not proceeding with the thermal oxide reprocessing plant (THORP) — the subject of the 1977 Windscale inquiry — with the loss of construction jobs and £350 million of investment. It involves the planned run down of the Magnox reprocessing line, probably over a period of years as suitable dry stores are built. It should also incorporate the cancellation of plans to build a new plutonium fuel reprocessing plant at Dounreay on the north coast of Scotland.

IN SUCH A scenario there would still be plenty of work for Sellafield's nuclear scientists — looking after the manifold plutonium and nuclear waste stores already on the site, devising new ways to render them less harmful, and running the new dry stores. Because of the crucial and increasingly controversial role of reprocessing in separating plutonium for Britain's nuclear weapons programme, it is difficult to imagine the current government completely abandoning the process. But if they ceased 'civil reprocessing, at least that which remained would be unambiguously military.

Sellafield's safety record is undeniably appalling. There have been a total of 270 accidents at the plant since 1950, the most serious in 1957 causing three million gallons of contaminated milk from nearby farms to be poured away. After a series of leaks in the late 1970s, the government's Health and Safety Executive conducted a major safety review which said that the plant's safety standards had 'deteriorated to an unsatisfactory level', concluded in 1981:

> We are strongly of the opinion that such a situation should not have been allowed to develop, nor should it be permitted to occur again. The present company policy and the licensing arrangements of the nuclear installations inspectorate should provide the necessary safeguards.

Four years later, BNFL (British Nuclear Fuels Limited which now runs Sellafield) were successfully prosecuted by the government for the incidents which lead to the contamination of local beaches in 1983 and 1984. In the last two months there have been four significant mishaps at Sellafield, and the Health and Safety Executive has ordered its Nuclear Installations Inspectorate to carry out another safety review. It is well known that the inspectorate is chronically underpaid, understaffed and overstretched (*New Statesman*, 29 November 1985). In the circumstances anyone waiting for the new review to bring substantial improvements would be well advised not to hold their breath.

Despite BNFL's extraordinary knack of continually shooting itself in the foot, one can have some sympathy for its beleaguered bosses. Some of the public's response to nuclear issues is based on irrational fears and media coverage can be uneven and misleading. Nuclear advocates, of course, equally take up illogical and emotional stances, like the enduring and rather endearing 1950s notion of atoms for peace.

This is not to say emotional responses are trivial. They are the key motivations on both sides of the argument. Scientific objectivity and political neutrality are as much myths amongst nuclear critics and enthusiasts as they are in any other areas of life.

In the last resort our attitude is more likely to be determined by our social and political outlook than anything else. If we believe that something approximating to the status quo is the best system possible, we will probably support nuclear power. If we think it is a good place to get our fingers into the cracks of capitalism or the secret state or military power, we will oppose it. □

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Derek Hatton — if only 'Southern softies' would take a trip to Wigan Pier, he'd never have gained such a foothold

Gerard Lizett

THEY'RE ALL MOUTH

SARAH BENTON peers down Militant's yawning credibility gap

OVER 50 YEARS ago, in the days of the last great depression, a nice young man, a Liberal voter, a University graduate and a member of the privileged classes, went to Liverpool. His first experience of industrial decay (for Merseyside was even then on the skids), of the brutal indignity of mass unemployment, turned him into a left-wing socialist.

Michael Foot's experience was not unique. It is part of Militant's case, that if those from the soft South would actually face up to the wretched conditions that hundreds of thousands of people in Liverpool are forced to endure, then they would see why militant, class-based policies are the only answer. As far as many of their supporters can see, what Labour offers instead is the delusions of the soft South, a blindly comfortable accommodation of 'careerist politicians' with that same 'enemy' which reduced much of the country to a human wasteland in the first place. A placard carried by one of the mass supporters lobbying Labour Party head office last week declared: 'Expel the careerists, not Militant'.

But there's the problem. To expel the careerists would be to institute a witch-hunt ('do you or do you not have ambitions in the Labour Party?), to carry out a purge which, as we all know, Militant is against as an adamant point of principle. So they say. For a great deal of what Militant says bears little relation to what it actually does and even less to what a political party can do, when it holds power.

To their left-wing critics (though here the meaning of left and right becomes more subjective than usual) the 'real crime' of Militant is that its harsh, denunciatory rhetoric has made it *harder* to defend jobs and services, *harder* to attract the new recruits to socialism which Labour must have if it is ever again to form a majority government.

To other left-wing critics, like the Socialist Workers' Party who recently made disingenuous 'unity' moves to Militant, the 'real crime' (the phrase is Leftspeak) is that Militant pretends that it *wants* to get socialism through such a parliamentary majority. Instead of holding endless meetings to check on the imminent betrayal of the cause by elected leaders, Militant should go all out for the revolutionary road.

An instance of this gap between words and actuality is Liverpool housing. One of the proudest boasts of Liverpool Militant, made at many public meetings, is that the council has built more housing than the rest of the country put together. This is quite obviously not true. But even allowing for the normal exaggeration of political speeches, Liverpool's record is not outstanding. Between January 1981 and September 1985 (Labour won power in 1983) there were 1,717 council housing starts in Liverpool. In the same period, there were 161,804 in England as a whole.

Of the Liverpool housing starts, a high proportion were initiated as co-op or housing association dwellings, which the council took over. Militant's hostility to forms of common ownership other than by the State was the first major cause of unease among other socialists.

Equally questionable is Militant's insistence that in Liverpool they have uniquely provided for direct class-based trade union involvement ('real' shop floor workers as opposed to the 'fashion designers' and 'headmistresses' that they have detected in trade union rooms elsewhere). The institution for this direct representation was the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee. So undemocratic did Liverpool's trade unions find it that every union except one branch of the GMBATU has withdrawn from it. They have instead formed the Joint Union Forum which Liverpool Council refuses to negotiate with, preferring the old class enemy tactic of single union negotiation.

Militant is consistent on race and sex. Having backed class enemy Eric Hammond at conference in moving motions against Black sections they have never pretended to champion black political representation. If oppression and exploitation are wholly explained by the class relations of capitalism then only class organisations can fight back.

HERE WE ENTER the terrain of what Trotsky, describing Stalin's Russia, called 'substitutionism' — the party substitutes for the working class and eventually the government/State substitutes for the party. The next serious crack in Militant's local support came over the appointment of Samson Bond as race relations officer. He had no credibility in local black politics; he *was* a Militant supporter. In other words, the principle of leadership by the party — or in this case, the party-within-a-party — overrides all others. Faced with the unremitting hostility of the local black movement to Bond's appointment, Liverpool Council ended up dissolving the race relations committee into a bland Equal Opportunities Committee (to cover women and the disabled as well) which has virtually no direct representation from those whom it 'represents'.

It is this principle of party control which has bedevilled the council's relationship with its officers. Experts on local authority spending are agreed on one thing: that there is no evidence that Liverpool's stance has saved the area from a single cut and plenty of evidence that, had they trusted their finance officers to do the sort of 'creative accounting' which rescued many another left-wing (sic) council, they could have brought in enough government block grant to close the gap between expected revenue and income. A table in this month's *New Socialist* comparing council expenditure in 1981-82 with their budgets for this year puts Liverpool well down towards the bottom of the league.

Liverpool Council's decisions are, of course, a matter for the electorate to judge — not the district auditors whose right to disqualify the councillors was confirmed yesterday. This leaves Liverpool with little option but to defend their and their councillors' rights.

Anyway, whatever Militant has actually done, and certainly regardless of what it says, many on the Left feel obliged to defend it against attack for fear that the Right will re-establish control and turn on the whole of the Left. For that Left to protect itself behind the dishonest shield of Militant is merely to obliterate itself and any opportunity for the long-awaited new democratic socialism. □

Additional information: Ian Williams

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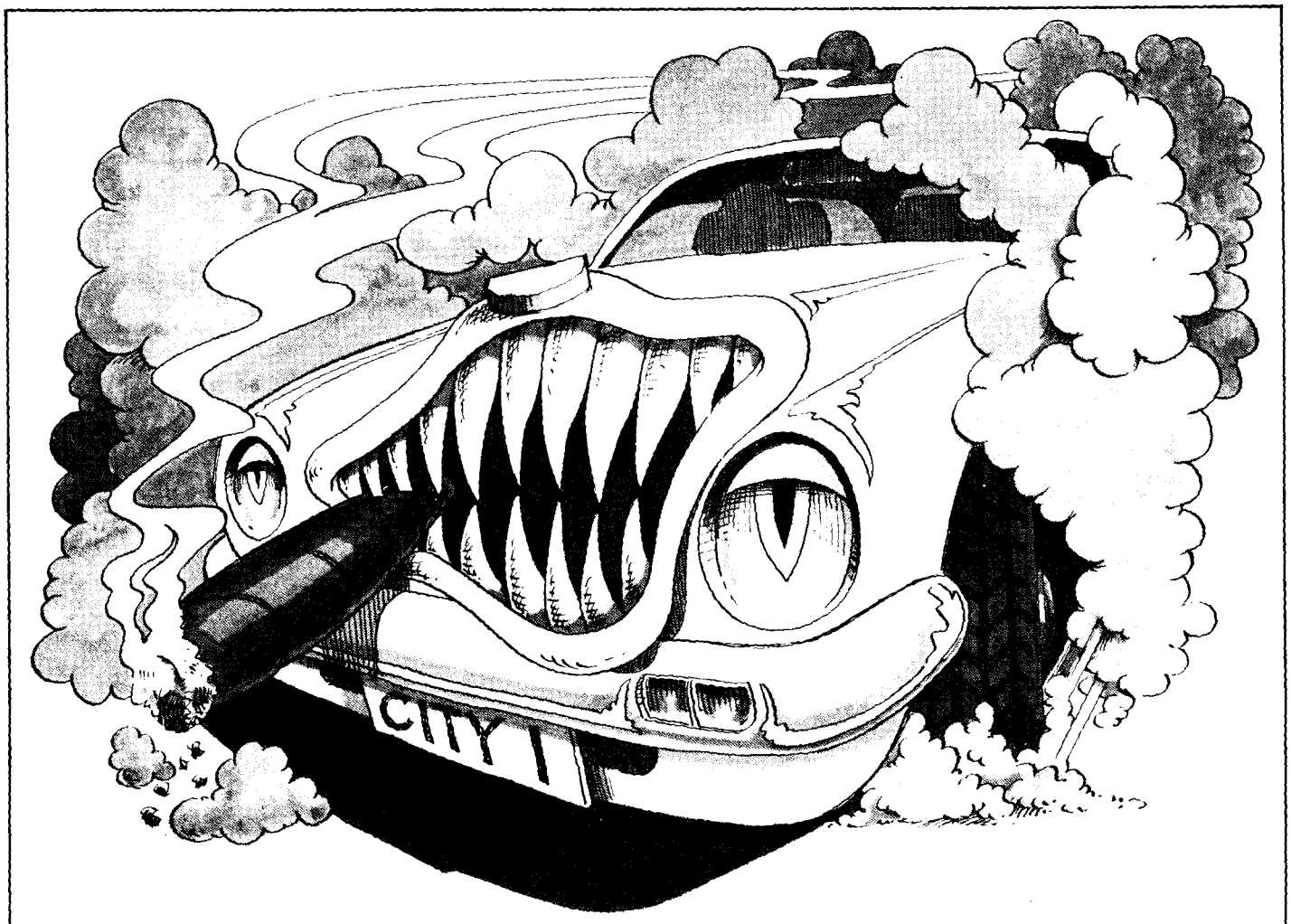

Meet the new city boss.

When the GLC goes, at the end of March, the Department of Transport steps in. Sixty five miles of London's roads will be "trunked". Another 300 miles of "designated" roads in local boroughs will come under government control. If you want a zebra crossing, your local authority will have to consult the Department of Transport!

Who will benefit most from these changes? Primarily commuting motorists and the all-powerful road lobby. Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for Transport, once said: "The motorist likes being a motorist because he can exercise freedom of choice. If people want to commute into London, who am I to say they shouldn't?"

It's a fact that 79% of cars entering Central London in the morning are company cars. Subsidies on company cars amount to two billion pounds annually. That's more than the total subsidy on our national rail and bus systems combined.

The road lobby's traditional argument runs as follows: our roads are congested, therefore we need more roads to relieve the congestion. However, road widening can help cause that congestion. The more we build, the more traffic we get.

As a result, many homes are blighted by road building plans. Our children take their lives in their hands when they cross a road. (7,196 children were killed or injured in road accidents in London last year.) The air stinks with petrol fumes, noise levels rise and whole areas of our city turn into wasteland.

We know there are better ways of getting around. Between 1982 and 1984, under the GLC's cheap fares policy, tube usage went up by 44%, bus usage went up by 13% and peak time car commuting went down 21%. There were fewer accidents, less pollution, and getting around London was easier for millions of people.

That's one of the reasons why Friends of the Earth has just launched a 'Cities for People' campaign. Its aim is to stimulate an urgent and critical debate about what we are doing to our capital city. It offers sensible alternatives to meet the travelling needs of Londoners. We invite you to find out more about it and to send for an information pack on the campaign. And send for it today so that you can get involved in the debate for a London where the car does not automatically get in our way.

THIS ADVERTISEMENT IS PART OF THE 'CITIES FOR PEOPLE' INFORMATION CAMPAIGN.

CITIES FOR PEOPLE
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'OSTRICH POSE' PROVEN WRONG

A £500,000 international scientific study of what would happen to London in war was published this week. DUNCAN CAMPBELL reports on the significance of the GLC's Greater London Area War Risk Study ('GLAWARS') in the struggle between 'nuclear free' local authorities and the Home Office

THE GLAWARS REPORT* is the most detailed and comprehensive study ever mounted on the likely effects of war on a large modern city. Written by a team of international experts, it is a powerful indictment of current British government civil defence policy.

The GLAWARS Commission was wholly independent of the GLC. The government offered the Commissioners only studied non co-operation. Home Office officials even told a director of the Polytechnic of the South Bank (which was responsible for the academic independence of GLAWARS) that they intended to 'avoid anything which appeared to endorse' the needs of local authorities to have realistic planning assumptions on which to base civil defence plans.

Reasuringly, the report assesses the threat of war 'during the next few years' as low. But a 'war scare', which might be economically destructive, was more likely than actual hostilities against civilians.

The 'most likely' course of a future war for London was conventional attack followed by the use of nuclear weapons. Thereafter, any 'attempts to restrict [the use of nuclear weapons] to military targets would be likely to fail', and 'the temptation to depart from planned strategies and to release an orgy of destruction would be high'. 'Should this happen', the report concludes, 'London would be destroyed'. Such an attack would kill up to 97 per cent of Londoners, and 'even a much less severe attack . . . would destroy about one third of the city.' In these circumstances, the reports concludes that 'all forms of civil defence would be useless'.

GLAWARS considered that British civil defence planning was crippled by the government's intentionally misleading guidance to the public. An opinion survey taken last year indicated that, in the event of war, 'about two thirds of Londoners would be disposed to join mass demonstrations against UK involvement'. One quarter of those interviewed said they would contemplate direct action to stop a war, while 12 per cent would consider 'violent methods of protest'. The government's hope that Londoners would be willing to stay and carry out their civil defence plans was contradicted by the survey's finding that, once a war scare started, two thirds of emergency service workers would not report for work. Some 35 per cent of Londoners would leave town and: 'The city would effectively be paralysed even before any attack against it was launched.'

GLAWARS was commissioned because of the Home Office's longstanding policy of keeping its head firmly planted in the sand where 'war risks' are concerned. In 1982, when the Home Office cancelled the civil defence exercise 'Hard Rock', the official line was that cancellation was necessary because nuclear free authorities would not play. In fact Ministers had tampered so extensively with the assumptions on which the exercise was based that it became totally unrealistic.

The last straw was when a junior minister told officials that, as well as removing all nuclear and US bases from the Soviet 'target' list and insisting that all cities be 'missed', nuclear attacks should omit all Conservative marginal constituencies. At this point, even the government's own civil defence planners threw in the towel.

The Home Office refuses to provide local authorities with 'realistic' planning assumptions for nuclear civil defence, so more authorities are following the GLC's lead and commissioning their own planning studies.

GLAWARS come to the major conclusion that the Home Office policy of 'flexible planning' is an 'essentially unworkable philosophy'. They say that it is absurd for the Home Office to claim to be unable to identify areas of high risk and low risk of damage in the event of attack. Indeed, Whitehall has dispersed command centres and food stores on the basis of such assessments.

Unless the 'flexible planning' policy was abandoned by central government, the Commission reported:

> Civil defence in the UK is likely to be of marginal use and its cost effectiveness to remain extremely limited.

*The Report of the GLAWARS Commission will be published in May by Basil Blackwell.

The GLAWARS Commission

Dr Ann Ehrlich — Stanford University biologist and nuclear winter specialist

Dr S William Gunn — Head of Emergency Relief Operations, World Health Organisation

Dr Stuart Horner — British Medical Association Council Member

Vice-Admiral John M Lee — former Assistant Director, US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

Prof Frank von Hippel — Princeton University, physicist

Dr Peter Sharfman — National Security Program Manager, Office of Technology Assessment, US Congress

Rapporteur: **Robin Clarke** — Senior UNESCO environment consultant

The story so far — and why I got out

UNDER THE SHADOW of abolition, the GLC could only pass GLAWARS on to its successor – a new 'qualgo' (quasi autonomous local government organisation), the London Fire and Civil Defence Authority (LFCDA). GLAWARS says firmly that the new authority should give no further consideration to civil defence measures to deal with a major nuclear attack and 'restrict its civil defence planning' accordingly.

It does say that certain kinds of civil defence planning might be effective, in a limited way, in the case of other (improbable) types of attack. Such observations, quoted selectively, might be held to justify Home Office civil defence policy. This possibility caused such discomfort inside some parts of the GLC that during January some members and officials tried to have the GLAWARS report altered. When GLAWARS staff refused to consider these approaches, officials working in the GLC's Nuclear Policy Unit asked other nuclear free local authorities to campaign with them to 'suppress' the GLAWARS report.

The NFZ authorities' National Steering Committee rejected such a campaign, 'welcomed the report', and this week 'applauded' the GLC for setting up GLAWARS. It 'will assist other NFZ authorities in their own efforts to obtain detailed planning assumptions information', the committee said.

Home Office Minister Giles Shaw refused this week to take part in a two-way television discussion with the GLAWARS commissioners. The Home Office also ordered its civil defence adviser, Eric Alley, not to appear on a Thames TV programme, after he had agreed to take part. After the GLAWARS report, there can be no dispute that the present basis of government civil defence policy is so fundamentally flawed as to be worthless. The onus is on the government to come clean and face the facts about the risks of war to a nuclear-armed state like Britain.

Duncan Campbell was co-opted as a member of the GLC in 1982, served as the Council's adviser on civil defence policy, and was responsible for commissioning the GLAWARS report. Because of the attempts to interfere with GLAWARS, mentioned above, he resigned from the GLC two weeks ago.

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MEDIA

Today's revolution revealed

PAUL FOOT

EVERYONE IN newspapers this week is talking about revolution: revolution in Pimlico. *Today,* the new daily paper owned by Eddy Shah, is out at last. It carries on its front page a colour picture of a revolutionary subject — Her Majesty The Queen.

The revolutionary atmosphere has been rarefied by the publication this week of a whole book* about Eddy Shah, the revolutionary-in-chief. The book is 303 pages long, even without the index, which might have proved the most useful part of it. It is written by two top Fleet Street journalists who have spared us nothing about their hero. We learn on page 202 that Mr Shah sometimes has 'to quickly recharge his batteries' (to give you a flavour of the style). He does it, apparently, by 'watching American football on the television'.

Shah was thrown out of Gordonstoun 'for stealing sweets I think' (so Mr Shah says and the authors haven't been able to confirm it). He left Granada 'under a cloud' (the authors haven't said *what* cloud). The accounts of his Messenger Companies can hardly be said to be a model of disclosure. But Patrick Wintour and David Goodhart assure us that Eddy Shah is a wonderful human being. Indeed, he may even have divine qualities. The authors quote Mrs Shah as believing she was kept alive during her battle with cancer 'through the sheer force of his personality'.

Eddy Shah, the book tells us, has made a revolution. You can tell that at once from the revolutionaries who have helped him. Wintour and Goodhart name some of them: Norris McWhirter, chairman of the ultra-Right Freedom Association; Lord Taylor (ennobled by Thatcher), deeply reactionary chairman of Taylor Woodrow; Lord Forte (ennobled by Thatcher) and Lord Cayzer (ennobled by Thatcher), whose companies have been among the top contributors to Tory party funds; and the McAlpine family, whose most famous heir, Lord McAlpine (ennobled by Thatcher) is Treasurer to the Conservative Party.

They provided the money. The brains came from Andrew Neil, who beckoned Mr Shah down the road to revolution over lunch at the Savoy Hotel, and who is editor of the *Sunday Times,* a paper which has lost more brains and talent than any other paper in British newspaper history. Political advice was available from Lord Harris, former bagman to Roy Jenkins, and, as far as I know, the only Home Office Minister ever to appoint himself chairman of the Parole Board.

WHAT KIND of a paper do *you* think will emerge from all that? More of the same? I imagine so.

So where is the revolution? Simple. The 'revolution' has broken the influence on newspaper publishing of the print unions. 'Old-fashioned practices' will be no more. New technology reigns, and never again will a jumped-up printworker be able to talk out of turn to important people in the composing room. (There *is* a decent book about Eddy Shah, by the way. It has the right title. It is by Mark Dickinson, and is called: *To Break A Union*).

Goodhart and Wintour get all in a muddle at the end of their account. They don't really know what to conclude, except that 'the British newspaper industry already has one revolution to be coming to terms with'. They *seem* to subscribe to the view that 'the Left' (whatever that is) will benefit from the Shah revolution, for it will now be possible to produce left-wing papers much more easily, without the union bully-boys muscling in.

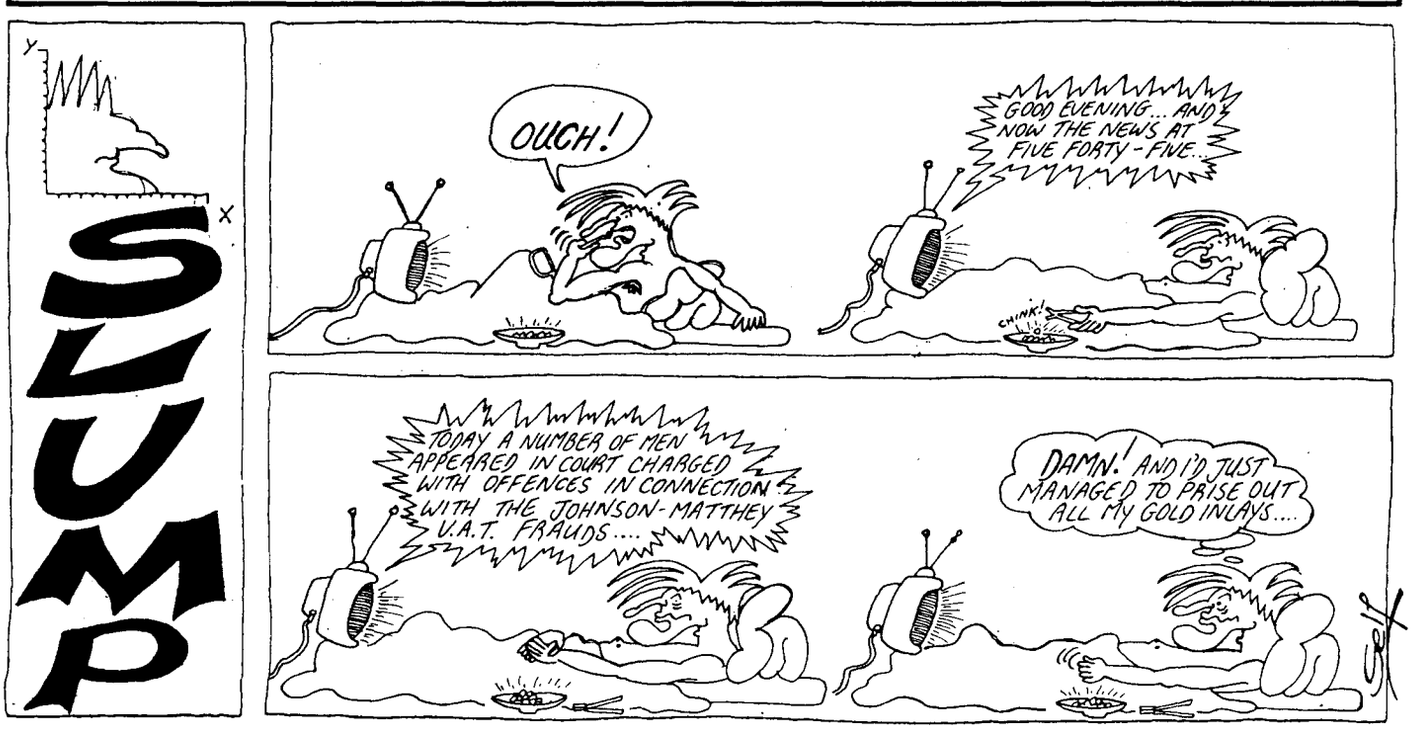
This is tripe. It has always been possible to produce new left-wing newspapers, and the print unions have never been the real problem. The chief obstacles have been advertising, distribution, promotion (all of which stay in exactly the same hands). The notion that a rampant ruling class, flushed with success over miners and printworkers, will sit back in gentle tolerance while socialist papers proliferate is quite fantastic.

As for the existing papers, the desperate decline in journalistic standards (which Wintour and Goodhart do chronicle) is *not in any way* the fault of the unions. They are *not in any way* the fault of old technology. You can make up quotas, tell lies, invade people's privacy and glorify trivia every bit as effectively with new technology as you can with old.

The decline in standards has come down from the top. So the fact that we have now been joined by another posturing newspaper proprietor who makes up in self-regard what he lacks in ability will not stop the rot at all. □

Paul Foot writes a weekly column for The Mirror.

*Eddy Shah and the Newspaper Revolution, *Coronet Books, £2.95 pb.*


SLUMP
OUCH!
GOOD EVENING... AND NOW THE NEWS AT FIVE FORTY-FIVE...
CHINK!
TODAY A NUMBER OF MEN APPEARED IN COURT CHARGED WITH OFFENCES IN CONNECTION WITH THE JOHNSON-MATTHEY V.A.T. FRAUDS....
DAMN! AND I'D JUST MANAGED TO PRISE OUT ALL MY GOLD INLAYS....

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DIARY

Ian Williams

Liverpool

Marcos and Imelda helped prop up their rule by hob-nobbing with the great, if not always so good, of the world, using the media to massage away messy domestic reality. But even the Grace Kelly of the South Pacific couldn't keep it up forever. Few non-Kipling fans realise that the call to take up the 'white man's burden', wasn't about India. It was a call upon the US to make sure that the Filipinos, 'the new-caught sullen peoples', didn't set a bad example by taking power themselves, after they'd thrown the Spaniards out. I hope Cory Aquino knows her country's history — or that her supporters do. Aguinaldo at the turn of the century turned out the Spanish, then had to fight the American would-be 'liberators' — only to become their pensioned retainer.

○

As Walworth Road's own declaration of martial law brings Liverpool's Unclear Winter to an end, there's a spring in the step of many. Adrian Henri, poet, painter and putative Grand Cham of the 'Pool, reported meeting the council's Leader at his doctor's. 'John Hamilton's been looking so drawn and tired lately,' he said. 'But he came skipping out of the surgery, rejuvenated, with a bright happy smile, looking years younger. I asked the Doctor if he was injecting monkey glands. He said all he'd done was tell John that the NEC were cutting out the monkey business from his Deputy!'

○

The *Liverpool Echo* wants to make some eighty NGA printers redundant. The NGA had asked for 'threats to boycott', but since Militant had already scored a municipal first with 30,000 of its own redundancies, a smokescreen of noisy solidarity was called for. Militant called for an immediate boycott of the *Echo,* even before the NGA itself had acted. The proposal was moved by Liverpool District Labour Party's President Tony Mulhearn with a ferocious denunciation of the *Echo*'s role in stirring up municipal muck. NGA member Mulhearn works for Bemrose, a Murdoch firm, which is still printing *News of the World* colour supplements. Sources close to the *Echo* whisper that the 'sources close to Deputy Leader Derek Hatton' quoted daily since the 'boycott' was announced are close enough to be a spitting image!

○

In Toxteth, Our Father has many houses. But, like human mansions, their architectural finery is no defence against depopulation and decrepitude. Within yards of the epicentre of the Toxteth riots there's a church on each corner, in what the hacks' cliché guide alleges is Liverpool's 'red-light' district. But expect no tawdry Soho finery here. Red lights are expensive and money is scarce. The day after the NEC's decision on Liverpool I wandered through the area.

The sun shone, but the bitter wind was as cold as a commissar's heart as I rediscovered the 'Ancient Chapel of Toxteth' and its commemorative plaque. Richard Mather was called here in 1618, to give 'the word of God to the people of Toxteth'. He was a 'non-conformable Puritan', the epitome of the Church Militant, who left for New England in pursuit of 'the spirit of Freedom'. And Richard begat Increase Mather; and Increase begat Cotton Mather; and Cotton misbegat the Salem Witch-hunts. Zealotry demands freedom — to enslave others.

In the same chapel's ground lies Jeremiah Horrocks, the astronomer, who did more than the apocryphal apple to help Newton's law-making. Jeremiah died in poverty, a prophet without honour in his own country, foreseer perhaps of the contemporary disdain for astronomy in Liverpool.

○

I met Jules Wright, the Playhouse director who's staged seven new plays in her first year here. She's resigning in despair at being ground between civic indifference and state malice. The city of the Beatles, Bleasdale and *Letter to Brezhnev* proclaims its sports centres, while its civic leaders cheer brain-damaging pugilism. But there's nothing down for theatres. At a Merseyside Arts meeting we wrestled for hours with County Abolition and Government Arts policy — which is to spread Agent Orange on any Glory at this end of the Garden. When someone asked 'What is Art?' it was almost a breakthrough to solidity.

'Art' is usually defined prejudicially, and negatively. More people are strong on what art isn't than what it is. The Romantic tradition of

ROGER WODDIS

Mark-up

A confidential Tory party document recommends that state schools should be sold off to private companies

Let us now praise company schools —
Schools for Prue and Neville —
For they foster jollity,
Juvenile frivolity
And the teachers' quality
Kept at market level.

Tender minds deserve the best,
Not the general scrimmage,
Where the State has had its day;
Sponsored schools make learning pay,
Also (though that's by the way)
Boost the company image.

Those who curse the profiteer
Brand him as a vandal;
Poisoning the public pool
Seems to be the golden rule —
Why should profits from a school
Be a greater scandal?

the Poet and Artist lives, so if you can persuade enough of the right sort of people that what you are doing is Art, then that's it. My English teachers, for example, carefully distinguished between the likes of Kipling who wrote 'verse' and greater breeds who wrote 'poetry'. If you understand it, it's verse; if not then it's poetry. There is a dangerous deal of scope for manufacturers of Imperial Clothing in this concept.

○

Anyway, the audience on Merseyside has a clear idea of the Plebeian Clothing necessary to survive. A quote came from a child of eight in a school in Speke. Bedazzled by *Dynasty* and similar plutoramas, she wanted to know how they caught planes like we catch buses and had swimming pools instead of overflowing dustbins in the backyard. Her mother had told her it was because *they* were millionaires, and could afford it. Theresa wrestled with the concept all the way to school and set it firmly in the context of Thatcher's Liverpool. 'Please Miss, if we got a Giro *every* day, would we be millionaires?'

○

I finished the week at my GP's and sat waiting next to a distressed mother for half an hour. She was debating with herself about whether she'd killed her baby, who was happily gambolling in front of her. She didn't get the full medical attention she needed, since her visit was interrupted by the attempted theft of the locum's car, driven at the closed gates on the car park. The receptionist clucked sympathetically. She's been taking karate lessons, but had given in gracefully when two men had demanded her bag the week before. The new locum came, saw and fled, confirming my incurability and doubting whether cures were available for the city. I looked round for happy auguries. At least the woman with the child was *arguing* with herself. Tories and Militant alike each keep agreeing with and applauding themselves! Who's got the better grip on reality?

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WINDOW OF HOPE APPEARS (ONLY JUST)

That old mirage of an arms agreement at Geneva looks a little closer as the super powers move — shakily — towards common ground. FELIX PIRANI maps out the lay of the land and urges Reagan et al in the direction of hope

Popperfoto

Camera Press

General Bernard Rogers (the Dodger) artfully stirred up Europe's paranoia of losing their very own nukes — much to Reagan's annoyance

A BREAKTHROUGH at the Geneva disarmament talks now seems genuinely possible. The hard words which President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev exchanged last week look like steps in a minuet of negotiation, not final statements of incompatible positions.

The current phase of dialogue began on 15 January, just before talks reopened in Geneva, when Gorbachev made a comprehensive proposal for the elimination of all nuclear weapons in three stages, to be completed by the end of this century.

In the first stage, lasting five to eight years, the Soviet Union and the US would each reduce by half the nuclear weapons which can reach the territory of the other. Intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) within range of Europe, including Soviet SS-20 and US cruise and Pershing missiles, would be eliminated. (INF here means nuclear missiles with ranges between about 1000 and 5000 km.) In this stage, British and French nuclear forces would be frozen and strategic weapons could not be transferred to allies. (This last provision would prevent the British acquisition of Trident missiles from the US.)

In the second stage, beginning in 1990 and lasting five to seven years, the other nuclear powers would also begin weapons reductions. Shorter-range nuclear weapons would be eliminated. In the third and final stage, lasting until the year 2000, all remaining nuclear weapons would be eliminated.

The main innovations in the Gorbachev proposal are the eventual *complete* elimination of nuclear weapons and the specific timetable for reductions of strategic missiles. There are also important changes in proposed 'linkages' between different aspects of disarmament. In the past the Russians have demanded that British and French nuclear missiles be counted with US weapons in Europe. They now propose that these missiles be frozen at their present numbers and capabilities.

Previously, the Russians demanded a ban on research in space-based weapons for the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI, or 'Star Wars'). They continue to insist that development, testing and deployment be renounced by both sides, but the new proposals would allow research to continue. Gorbachev is apparently concerned not to make an issue of SDI so long as it remains inside laboratories.

The US Administration was caught unawares by Gorbachev's offer and debated for more than a month before replying. The British expressed severe anxiety at the

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prospect of losing Trident as a replacement for Polaris. The West Germans were worried about shorter-range Soviet nuclear missiles in East Germany and Czechoslovakia. Eventually Reagan sent Paul Nitze, his Special Adviser for Arms Control Negotiations, to Europe to give assurances that the US would refuse to make any unilateral commitment to the Russians about British or French nuclear forces.

In the meantime, at a meeting with Senator Edward Kennedy, Gorbachev questioned the worth of holding another summit meeting with President Reagan if no INF agreement were to be reached first. When Kennedy returned from Moscow, he wrote of 'a golden moment for arms control', suggesting that remaining points of disagreement over INF could be resolved, and that 'a middle ground is visible in which British and French nuclear modernization could proceed, as long as the number of warheads is not substantially increased'.

ON 22 FEBRUARY, Reagan's reply was sent to Gorbachev and tabled at Geneva. Rejecting the Franco-British 'linkage', Reagan proposed the elimination of US and Soviet INF in Europe over the next three years, rather than over five or more.

This, however, brought him into direct conflict with General Bernard Rogers, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe. The conflict arises from the inconsistency between Reagan's vision of himself as the great peacemaker and Rogers's view of his job as head of NATO.

Rogers says that to eliminate INF now would leave Western Europe open to Soviet coercion. When rumours about the contents of the US reply began to circulate, but before it was sent, Rogers made a speech to the North Atlantic Assembly echoing the German concern about shorter-range missiles and saying that an INF-less Western Europe would be open to pressure from Soviet conventional forces.

Reagan's rejection of linkage between INF reduction and freezing French or British forces seems to have allayed British anxiety. The Foreign Office called Reagan's proposal 'a good basis for negotiation'. Gorbachev disagreed. In his speech to the Soviet Party congress, he rejected Reagan's proposals as unserious and reiterated his demand for linkages.

The following evening, Reagan, campaigning on nationwide television for higher defence spending, maintained that 'Our adversaries, the Soviets, respect only nations that negotiate from a position of strength'. This naturally drew further Soviet criticism.

There is a distinction between the internal and the external pressures on Reagan. According to one poll, US public support for increased military spending has dropped from 72 to 22 per cent in the last five years. Reagan's military budget should be seen more as providing profits for defence contractors than as providing the wherewithal to fight the Russians.

The Congress, on the other hand, is concerned about the Federal budget deficit and critical of Reagan's increased defence demands at the cost of cuts in social welfare programmes. The Congressional General Accounting Office asserts that in recent years 56 per cent of US defence spending, or between $120 and $170 billion a year, has been attributable to support of NATO. The other NATO nations have between them a gross national product comparable to that of the US, but spend about 3.9 per cent of it on defence, compared to about 6.6 per cent for the US.

Reagan's could answer these internal criticisms, preserve his image as a nuclear peacemaker and resolve his conflict with General Rogers by persuading his European allies to strengthen their conventional forces. This would be a major diplomatic obstacle, but the US is in a strong bargaining position. If he succeeded, Reagan could in effect export half the budget deficit to Europe. Some adjustments in the timing of Gorbachev's second stage would relieve the concern of Rogers and the West Germans about shorter-range missiles.

The linkage problem would still need to be solved. The British and French have long maintained that their forces should be put on the negotiating table only when the US and Soviet Union have made substantial strategic reductions. A compromise, opening up Kennedy's 'middle ground', may be made easier by Reagan's suggestion that INF elimination be completed in only three years. This could lead to the next Gorbachev stage before unacceptable increases in capabilities, such as the British acquisition of Trident, have been reached.

The Russians are determined that SDI should stop at the research stage. Here they may well find support from the US Congress. The Congress doesn't like spending money for hardware which won't work. SDI won't — and its advocates have continually to modify their proposals, in order to retain any technical plausability. Reagan still supports SDI rigorously, but as it becomes clearer that deployment would be pointless, it should be possible for him to put an end to the programme, saying 'well, we tried', without losing his peacemaking face. In the end this may be more important to him than sustaining the military-industrial complex. □

Felix Pirani is Emeritus Professor of Rational Mechanics at London University.

CLUE OF THE 'SUICIDE' SOLDIER

MUBARAK FEARS US-BACKED COUP

Last week's riots in Egypt were just a symptom of the struggle for power in which President Mubarak is fighting to stave off the threat from his Minister of Defence, writes CLAUDIA WRIGHT

Washington

IN RECENT MONTHS the contest between Mubarak and Field Marshall Abdel-Halim Abu Ghazala, the deputy prime minister and Minister of Defence, has more than once provoked Mubarak to threaten privately to resign. It has hamstrung the five-month old government of prime minister Ali Lutfi. Even before young conscripts of the Central Security Forces began rioting — with the apparent connivance of dozens of their officers — Abu Ghazala had been sharply critical of the refusal by the interior minister, General Ahmed Rushdi, to crack down on protests and strikes around the country.

The regular army has long resented the security force as a well-equipped 'alternative' army, and in the wake of the clashes between the two forces, Abu Ghazala will press hard to bring the security command under direct army control. Mubarak is resisting and appealing to the political opposition and press to support the government before it falls under a military dictatorship.

At the emergency cabinet meeting after the Cairo violence began, Abu Ghazala's allies called for the cabinet to be dissolved and a new government formed. Mubarak refused, but the pressure is likely to continue to force him to cede power or resign himself. So concerned are Mubarak's supporters at the prospect of the 'Palace Coup' they believe Abu Ghazala is contemplating that they have warned the President against giving in to Abu Ghazala's demands to be named vice president. If Mubarak concedes that, his friends say, he will be signing a 'contract' on his own life.

THE LONG SIMMERING contest between Mubarak and Ghazala had already come to a head in January. The clash was provoked by the mysterious death of an Egyptian soldier in Cairo's military prison. Egyptian officials and opposition leaders in Cairo say they have evidence that Suleiman Khatir, a 25-year old Egyptian soldier convicted of killing a group of Israelis in the Sinai last October, did *not* commit suicide in prison last month, as the military authorities have claimed. Instead, Egyptian sources say, Khatir was murdered on the orders of the army high command, to prevent him from revealing what he knew of Israeli espionage within the Egyptian army, and to sabotage a promise of clemency Mubarak had given him.

The Khatir case has already inflamed public opinion throughout Egypt, and there have been riots, university protests, and calls by the press and opposition political figures for a full investigation of the circumstances of the young soldier's alleged crime and subsequent death. According to a variety of Egyptian

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sources, Khatir was a soldier assigned to the military intelligence service and posted to a sensitive installation at Ras al-Burqa, on the Gulf of Aqaba about 45 kilometres south of Taba. The ownership of this chunk of the Sinai is still the subject of diplomatic dispute between Egypt and Israel.

Officially, neither Egyptian nor Israeli reports have described Khatir as anything other than a soldier assigned to routine police duties at a place the Israeli press has described as a local beauty spot. The reports also agree that Ras al-Burqa is Egyptian territory, and that Israeli visitors are not permitted to come ashore or enter by road without permits from the Egyptian authorities. Under the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli treaty, however, Ras al-Burqa comes within Zone C, the strip of Sinai running up to Israel's frontier and according to the treaty, only Egyptian civil police are permitted to be stationed there to perform 'normal police functions'. Khatir's lawyers and other Egyptian sources say his post in military intelligence made his presence at Ras al-Burqa illegal and the electronic equipment installed there compounded the potential breach of the treaty by the Egyptian side.

It was Khatir's duty to supervise and guard the installation. On 5 October, in an act Egyptian and Israeli officials have described as 'crazy', Khatir opened fire with a submachine gun on a group of Israelis, killing a man, two women, and four children and wounding two other children. According to Khatir, the group refused to obey his order (first in Arabic, then in English) to halt, and provoked the firing after one of the women tore down an Egyptian flag and spat on it. He said he was 'only doing my duty.'

BEFORE HIS trial, Khatir later told his lawyers, President Mubarak sent an emissary to his military prison with a proposal. If Khatir agreed to five conditions, the President would arrange for him to be sentenced to a prison term of five years and then facilitate his release even sooner. Khatir was not to mention in court that he was serving in military intelligence; he was not to reveal that his orders required him to guard military equipment in the zone; and he was not to testify that before the shooting one of the Israelis had torn down an Egyptian flag and spat on it.

The fourth condition referred to charges Khatir had made, some time before, in official reports to his superiors in military intelligence. In these reports Khatir had accused an Egyptian army colonel and a general of the Sinai Command of having secretly passed to the Israelis information regarding Egyptian military communications and the frequencies of Egyptian air-defence radars covering the Sinai. There is no corroboration for these charges, but Khatir's family members say he wrote details of what he had discovered in his letters home, and that the reports had been officially logged by the military intelligence headquarters. According to Khatir, his reports were well-known to the army high command and to the president, and it was a condition of leniency that he say nothing about them in court. The fifth condition was that he tell no one, not even his lawyers, of the deal that had been offered.

Khatir's lawyers now say they knew nothing about the five conditions until after the court-martial ended and after the judge had announced the verdict of guilty and a sentence of life imprisonment — when Khatir apparently realized he had been betrayed. On 7 January, Khatir's lawyer arrived at the military prison along with his cousin, a medical doctor, and the leader of Egypt's socialist Labour Party. They were told he had committed suicide that morning by hanging himself on a rope of bedsheets tied to the bars of his cell window. They demanded to see the body; there were no signs of death by hanging, they say. Instead, they saw blueness under the armpits and a thin red line, tracing a half-circle in the front of Khatir's neck — both signs suggesting he had been electrocuted, possibly after being drugged first. Photographic evidence obtained by a Cairo magazine supports the conclusion of Khatir's family and laywers that he could not have hanged himself in his cell, as the military authorities have claimed.

Corroborating evidence in Khatir's case is difficult to come by. The day Khatir died, Egyptian sources say, was the day his appeal for clemency was to have been decided by President Mubarak. Egyptian opposition politicians speculate that Khatir was murdered to make sure Mubarak could not release him, and to destroy Khatir's evidence of what was really happening in the Sinai — both the infringements of the treaty and Israeli penetration of the Egyptian army. They believe only the army had the means and the motive to carry out the murder, and that Abu Ghazala benefits, Mubarak loses, by his death. When bitter protests went on for several weeks at Khatir's natal village of Akyad, Abu Ghazala tried to compel the security forces to break them up; this didn't happen, apparently with Mubarak's blessing.

EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS and opposition leaders are convinced that, first in the Khatir affair, and now in the police riots, Mubarak is facing a potentially mortal threat from his defence minister, Abu Ghazala and that Abu Ghazala has the backing of the Israelis and the Reagan administration. US officials are particularly anxious to prevent Mubarak making common cause with the air-defence command and junior officers in the army to increase military co-operation with the Soviet Union.

The Soviets are not only offering more effective missile defence against Israeli attack than the Americans will allow. Moscow is also proposing much more generous terms on rescheduling of payments on Egypt's military debt than it was willing to grant the Sadat regime, or than the Reagan administration is willing to offer the Egyptians at the moment. Washington insists that Mubarak agree to the economic terms of the International Monetary Fund before the US will agree to any rescheduling of Egypt's massive unpaid bills. US officials are privately dangling the threat of a cutoff of US military assistance unless Mubarak concedes very soon. Last week, Mubarak sent a private emissary, Tahsin Basheer, to plead with the US officials and the leaders of Israel's bloc in Congress to relieve the pressure on Mubarak.

US officials say the powerful business association in Cairo, some of Mubarak's cabinet ministers, and even lobbyists Egypt retains in Washington have been quietly undercutting the president and urging the Reagan administration not to agree to Mubarak's requests for debt relief unless and until he makes concessions to the business community.

The case of the dead soldier Suleiman Khatir and now the cases of the security police killed or arrested at the end of February have explosive potential. They are popular symbols of everything which ordinary Egyptians think is wrong with the country's strategic alliance with the US and Israel, and at the same time they challenge the control over Egypt which Abu Ghazala and the US embassy have been able to exercise since Sadat's assasination. □

This England

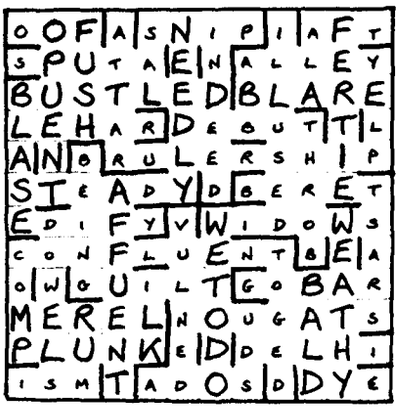
£3 Book Tokens for entries printed. (On postcards please).

□ A smallholder claims she was forced out of business when a low-flying jet ruined her rabbits' sex lives and shattered her hens' egg-laying. — *Daily Telegraph* (James Scott)

□ On that occasion the court heard that Mr Rew attacked his neighbour with a cricket bat which bore the signatures of the entire 1948 Australian Test team. — *The London Standard* (Jessica James)

□ An American who paid £60 for sex at a massage parlour but was interrupted by a police raid 'before he could get his money's worth' had his money returned by a judge. 'Any gesture towards our American allies must be of some help,' Judge de Piro told the court. — *Daily Telegraph* (Robert Jeffcoate)

Solution to Salamanca 104



Just like Robin (Hood) who robbed from the rich (opulent, flush, fertile, affluent, well-to-do, wealthy) to give to the poor (needy, busted, bare, base, bad, mere, punk).

Prizewinners to Salamanca 104

H. W. Evans (Langefni, Gwynedd)
Gary McStravick (Bath)
M. van Spankeren (Hyde, Cheshire)

SPECIAL PRIZE

Mrs C. J. Cox of Sandwich, Kent receives an AKAI PM-R3 Personal Stereo Cassette Player.

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LETTERS

Animal rights, human wrongs

Elsa Beckett, London E7

In reply to Ms Cooper's letter (*NS* 28 February), one of the links between racism, sexism and speciesism is this: oppressors, to justify their treatment of women or racial groups different from their own, often liken them to animals — subhuman, cows, bitches, rats etc. And how are animals treated? Badly, of course. So, if we can legislate against cruelty to animals we may be able to break this pattern of violence, hatred and false superiority. To be opposed to animal exploitation is *not* to say animals are more important than humans, any more than opposing cruelty to children means that children are more important than adults.

Patrick Williams, Nottingham

Elizabeth Cooper has got it wrong: to say that racism and sexism are on a par with speciesism is not to claim that they are identical, nor that animals should somehow take precedence. 'On a par' stresses, quite rightly, that they are analogous examples of unacceptable discrimination and abuse of power by dominant groups, and as such must all be opposed.

Many animal rights campaigners would no doubt be annoyed at the suggestion that they — like Ms Cooper — set up hierarchies of value among species. The human/animal relation is not a rigid opposition with one necessarily dominant; on the contrary, a great effort is made to emphasise the fact that our problems require a common solution. The assumption is implicit in Ms Cooper's letter that participation in one movement somehow disqualifies you from involvement in any other. In my experience, animal rights supporters are more likely also to belong to more obviously 'human' organisations such as CND or Amnesty International than they are to be single-minded one-issue campaigners.

Paul Teasdale, Cambridge

Jolyon Jenkins (*NS* 21 February) comments 'animal rights fits only jaggedly into other left-wing campaigns and commitments' implying that animal rights is a left-wing issue which the the rest of the Left must accept and come to terms with. I believe that the idea of animal *rights* has nothing to do with socialism and should be rejected.

To apply the concept of rights to *animals* grossly devalues it. The suggestion that 'speciesism' is similar to discrimination on grounds of race or sex is an intellectual short cut. It implies that the oppression of animals is the same as that of women or blacks, serves the same ends and can be corrected in the same way.

Socialism is concerned with the welfare of people and aims at removing unjust power over others. It is quite valid within this framework to be concerned with the welfare of animals or of a building or a landscape without imputing rights to the object of concern. It is sufficient that it is of value to people. Socialists cannot accept animals or buildings having a value in themselves; their only value is in how useful they are to people. To argue for the value and rights of some general 'life' (just because something has a nervous system) is a metaphysical idea which is incompatible with socialism.

Sara Starkey, London NW3

As in all politics there are many factions in the animal rights movement. At present the RSPCA has a self-righteous advertisement that claims donations to the Society achieve more than the wire cutting of militants. The RSPCA already has £18 million, from public donations, a good part of it invested in companies that actually perform vivisection on live animals. Militants do the dirty, frightening and often imprisonable acts of saving tortured animals. They have also been responsible for acquiring vital data on the activities taking place in these labs, some it used in historic legal challenges to the research establishments.

The RSPCA says it has changed many laws. Yet only recently a man was given a *maximum* three-month sentence for putting a live puppy in an oven and roasting it to death. On the other hand, while saving animals from the vivisector, militants have been given sentences of up to three years. One hundred and sixty years after the Society's formation, 3.5 million animals were still experimented on and killed in labs in 1984. Futhermore the RSPCA has welcomed the new Animals (Scientific Procedures) Bill that is going through Parliament which will not stop one single experiment now performed. Could the Society's enthusiasm for the Bill be linked to the fact that among the 18 members of its Animal Experimentation Advisory Committee there are 3 vivisectors, 6 ex-licence holders and 2 members of the pro-vivisection Research Defence Society?

While the Queen of England is the establishment figurehead of the RSPCA — a woman who makes money (through farming and racing) out of animals, I find the Society's sanctimonious posturing a farce.

Our very own Stalin

Moyra E. Grant, London W1

Andy McSmith's article (*NS* 21 February) is, like most of your pieces on the Soviet Union, disappointing. The recent changes in Soviet political leadership no more — or less — resemble Stalin's purges than they do Thatcher's 'purges' of the Cabinet and Permanent Secretaries (23 out of 27 so far replaced). A more objective analysis of international politics would recognise that, in both constitutional and practical terms, the British Prime Minister today is substantially more autocratic than any modern Soviet General Secretary. Too many Western commentators on the SovietUnion seem to live in a time warp.

Britain used to punish Lange

Barbara Einhorn, Brighton

Duncan Campbell and Patrick Forbes write (*NS* 21 February) that the purpose of the Royal Navy's 'Global 86' mission to the Pacific is to 'put pressure on New Zealand's anti-nuclear government', a view shared by the peace movement in New Zealand. What they fail to make clear is that the other purpose of this mission, viz participation in the RIMPAC exercises with the US and Japanese navies, specifically at the request of the US, is to replace the ousted 'bad boys' — the New Zealanders.

They conclude that since in their view — and contrary to New Zealand peace campaigners' findings — only two, and not six, of the seven Royal Navy vessels are actually permitted to carry nuclear weapons, 'New Zealand could safely receive at least some of the task force ships, if asked'. This suggestion stands in direct contravention of New Zealand government policy, which is to reject visits by all nuclear-capable warships. The New Zealand peace movement worked very hard to have this policy adopted; it is the only viable stance given that the US and Britain will neither confirm nor deny the presence of nuclear warheads. The decision to exclude all nuclear-capable warships is based on the conviction that to enter into a debate about whether or not a particular nuclear-capable warship is in fact carrying such weapons at any one point in time is likely to remain inconclusive and ultimately to undermine New Zealand's anti-nuclear position.

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BY MOANIN' MINNIE
25
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NO HEADACHES, SPORT. I'VE SACKED ALL THE NEW TECHNOLOGY
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PHOOOSH!
SPLAPF!
JOHN MINNION
THE END PRODUCT OF ALL THIS AMAZING TECHNOLOGY IS SO INCREDIBLY SOPHISTICATED THAT IT IS QUITE BEYOND OUR ABILITY TO REALLY APPRECIATE ITS QUALITY
NEWS OF THE WORLD

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SCOURGES OF THE MIND

What's in a drug? It could be VIM or kerosene, urine or brickdust. But it's not its ingredients which cause Western governments to decide whether a drug is a saviour or a scourge. ANDREW TYLER explains

Mary Evans Picture Library

David Hoffman

Left: Sherlock Holmes takes a relaxing puff from his opium pipe; above twentieth century heroin user

WHATEVER ITS other troubles the government has shown itself adroit in marshalling all shades of opinion for the war against the deadly drugs scourge. Who, after all, wants to stand up at the back of the class and vote *for* heroin on the streets? Nonetheless, the voters are now beginning to spot the gap between drug supremo David Mellor's generosity of rhetoric and his meanness of action. Seventeen million pounds over three years is not an overwhelming amount of money for rehabilitation, particularly since much of it has been misdirected.

Equally ill-advised is Mellor's dismissal of a key proposal by the Commons Home Affairs select committee that a National Drugs Advisory Service be set up. This would co-ordinate all the agencies in the field, whether NHS, voluntary or private; have them share data and insights and help train people up to a standard. Mellor held out against this idea in favour of a strictly local approach. He recognised, in the words of the old Indian adage: one arrow weak, many arrows tied in bundle to make national body, potentially big nuisance.

And so we see that no sooner is the drugs scourge issue looked in the face than we are torn from the realm of 'common humanity' all pulling together into the shabbily political. Inevitably so, alas. For if we study the history of any of the mood-bending or 'psychoactive' drugs we see that they repeatedly serve as the most potent metaphor for that which ails us politically or socially. We see that the reputation a drug achieves rarely has much to do with its pharmacological reality but is a product of a culture's topical, often racially-linked panics; or else the reputation is manufactured to serve an imperial or corporate interest.

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This can be illustrated by glancing at the careers of three substances that in our own time have assumed totemistic value: cocaine — tonic of the chic (although becoming increasingly proletarianised); heroin — ogre of working class youth and of the dissolute, idle rich; and tranquillisers — thumbsuck for millions of housebound women and nervous mid-ranking executives. We speak now of the ingrained image not of the more complex reality.

Perhaps the most immediately interesting of the three are the tranquillisers. For at this very moment they are poised in terms of their public esteem half-way between their first status as a medical therapy, and a new view of them as an irredeemable substance of abuse. Moles in the drug establishment indicate that later this year or early next they will be 'controlled' under the Misuse of Drugs Act, which means possession without prescription can in future lead to imprisonment. There will also be tougher lock-up procedures for pharmacists and the expectation of GPs that they check their wanton prescribing.

IT IS IRONIC that the tranks should arrive at such an unhappy pass for rarely in modern medicinal history has such a fanfare accompanied the launch of a new product. The first of the tranquilliser generation (they are derived from a class of chemicals known as benzodiazepines) were the Hoffman-La Roche brands, Librium and Valium. The stated intention was that they be prescribed short-term for short-lived anxieties and in bigger doses as sleepers. But by the time of their introduction in the early '60s, GPs were as addicted to the pharmaceutical Final Solution as their patients and repeat prescriptions became a matter of form. In the mid-'60s some 58 per cent of patients received a single trank course only. A decade later the single course figure had dropped to 16 per cent.

In fact the benzodiazepines perfectly filled the niche then being vacated by another central nervous system depressant, the barbiturate. First synthesised in 1864 using components of urine and apples, English doctors were issuing 13 million prescriptions a year as late as 1971, a time when barbs' high toxicity and addiction potential was well understood and the mortality rate was 2,000 people every 12 months.

In that same year of 1971, the UK turned down a proposal from the United Nations that we become signatories to a new Convention governing the distribution of the barbs along with a range of other psychotropic drugs. The British argument was that the psychotropics — chiefly synthetic compounds made by Western drug companies — were invaluable 'medicines' whose free flow through 'licit' channels to 'patients' was not to be tampered with. This posture can be contrasted with our relative enthusiasm (shared by other Western countries) for an equivalent UN Convention governing 'narcotics'. Narcotics here means cannabis, opium and cocaine — all products of the Third World and all rated not as licit medicines — despite a tradition of therapeutic use going back thousands of years — but as drugs of abuse.

But the barbs were finally discredited and into the breach came benzodiazepines.

Twenty years on we find that the benzodiazepines might not have killed the literally scores of thousands the barbs can lay claim to, but they have resulted in some 200,000 cases of dependence — a dependence giving rise to a withdrawal syndrome many users regard as more lingering and traumatic than that produced by heroin.

Not surprisingly, the drug companies are mounting the same argument against UN tranquilliser controls as was raised for barbs. And like the barbs before them the tranks are about to hit the streets in a major way, forced down by the weight of a (newly discovered) professional disapproval and further still by the new control measures. Barbiturates, once they reached street level, did an extraordinary amount of damage, most of which was ignored by the popular media. Gangrenous limbs caused by injections and overdoses were, and still are, common among young users. The tranquillisers are also likely to be ignored given their origin in the pristine Western laboratory.

Heroin

Derived from the opium poppy (*Papaver somniferum*), heroin also depends on acetic anhydride, used in the manufacture of celluloid film and synthetic fibres. The anhydride is boiled with an equal amount of morphine — one of a dozen alkaloids yielded by the poppy — and the resulting base put through several more chemical phases calling for acids, strychnine and caffeine. Pure heroin is some four times stronger than morphine. However, street heroin, priced at £55-£60 a gram is just 55 per cent legitimate with the remainder made up of other opium products, sugars, vitamin C and more malicious cuts like Vim and brick dust.

The recreational user seeks euphoria and a distancing of emotional and physical pain. Pharmacologically it acts as a powerful central nervous system depressant — breathing, heart rate, cough and bowel movements are reduced. This functional depression can be fatal. Whether snorted, chased (smoked on a foil) or injected, heroin will have the same impact — including possible addiction. Coming off heroin is less of a physical ordeal than coming off alcohol or barbs. The psychological entanglement, due in large part to what society has vested in this substance, can be and often is a protracted misery.

Tranquillisers

There are two types of tranquillisers — major and minor. The first, such as Largactil, are powerful compounds used to sedate the mentally ill and 'disruptive' prisoners. The minor sort are principally benzodiazepines, issued by GPs to quell every variety of agitation and, in larger portions, for sleep. None of the best known brand names, like Valium or Ativan, is available on the NHS anymore. Pharmacologically, the benzodiazepines are central nervous system depressants, working on the higher parts of the CNS, as distinct from alcohol and barbiturates which travel down the spine at higher doses making the body sloppy and numb. The 'psychoactive' effect of benzos is to produce tranquillity. But as more is consumed drowsiness, erratic mental performance, and eventually, stupor takes hold.

After about 6 weeks, tolerance is built up to the therapeutic dose. It must then be either stepped up or the user will simply be left with a chemical habit and, between pills, quite likely go in and out of withdrawal. About 200,000 people in the UK have a trank habit. Withdrawal, while not physically threatening, can be a long and emotionally testing business.

While the route taken by the benzodiazepines has been one of steep ascent and decline through the surgeries of the West, cocaine has been all things to all cultures. Popular for thousands of years among the Indians of the Andean plains, the leaves of the coca plant arrived in Europe soon after Spain's discovery of South America. But they travelled poorly, and it wasn't until the 1880s, by which time the alkaloid—cocaine — had been isolated, that *Erythroxylum coca* hit the medical mainstream.

The breakthrough was achieved by the discovery of cocaine's local anaesthetic properties, then by the recognition of the feats of physical and mental endurance that were possible while high on the drug. Young Sigmund Freud noted these features and in his treatise, 'On Coca', listed several more therapeutic applications, including the relief of digestive disorders, asthma and sexual lethargy. Freud's associate, Carl Koller, demonstrated the drug's miraculous potential as a local anaesthetic in eye surgery (for which it is still used) but it was when Freud began pushing coke as a cure for morphine addiction — a move that became a trend — that the backlash started. Europe's leading addiction specialist accused him of unleashing the Third Scourge Of Mankind — to go with alcohol and morphine — and among medics coke use became more selective.

In commercial circles, however, the drug flourished. It showed up in suppositories, tonic wines, even cigarettes. Coca Cola was just one of numerous beverages infused with the leaf's active ingredient and until 1903

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the Real Thing was still cocaine-active.

There was, at that time, no true distinction between recreational street use and general 'self-therapy' but political pressures soon arose to create just such a schism and with it the junkie syndrome. The forces that produced the divide are complex but they are easily illustrated by two developments — one British, one American.

In the US cocaine was being used from the turn of the century as a fillip among Southern blacks. It was an era in which the early promise of Reconstruction following the Civil War had given way to segregation, lynchings and other Klan activity. The black response was attributed to cocaine. Reports of crime-crazy black drug addicts began turning up in the media, with the absolute apogee coming in an article in the respectable *New York Times* claiming 'bullets fired into vital parts that would stop a sane man in his tracks failed to check the (cocaine) "fiend".'

By 1914, 46 States had passed laws restricting the sale and use of the drug and the Federal government was not simply working for national controls but measures that would extend across the globe.

In England there was a simultaneous though more localised tremor when, in 1916, a prostitute and an ex-convict were charged with selling coke to Canadian troops stationed at Folkestone. It was bad enough that the King's troops should be implicated in the use of narcotics. Worse that the likely supplier was the enemy herself — Germany, at that time the world's dominant cocaine producer. The idea grew, ill-founded it turned out, that cocainism was raging among British troops. Though bogus it provided the trigger for Britain's own control measures, enacted through the apparatus of the Defence of the Realm Act Regulation 40B. After the war 40B was remodelled into the Dangerous Drugs Act; and now the modern package of penalties was in place — the Home Office in command position over the old arbiters, the GPs and pharmacists. It is a position the Home Office has never relinquished.

There was still something of a British sniffing scene, both on the street corners of Soho and among a theatrical/upper class set.

Numerous pulp novels of the day fixed on it, serving up increasingly exotic and bone-shaking plots. The non-fictionalised drug circle was, however, so small and fragile that by about 1930 the new legislation had chased it away. There was in any case a whole new generation of licitly available mind-benders coming onstream, notably the amphetamines (stimulants more powerful and longer acting than cocaine) and the barbiturates. These substances were not simply licit, they were to be peddled by the drugs/medical industry with a zeal fit to shame a Mullah.

Cocaine

The substance snorted at smart left-wing dinner parties is cocaine hydrochloride, a white crystaline powder derived from the South American plant, *Erythroxylum coca*. Its leaves have been chewed or sucked by Andean Indians for some 5,000 years. Even today 90 per cent of the high plains inhabitants ingest about two ounces daily — virtually their entire necessary vitamin intake. Intermediate stage between leaf and hydrochloride is pasta, made by treating the sun dried leaves with gasoline and hydrochloric acid. To get hydrochloride the pasta goes through several washes in kerosene, is chilled, then treated with more alcohol and acid. The product is 90 per cent pure. Most street coke is 55 per cent pure, cut with glucose, amphetamine sulphate (speed) or lesser stimulants.

A strong solvent will separate the cutting agents from the hydrochloride, producing 'freebase'. (It is when pop stars heat their freebase — with traces of the solvent still in it — that they set fire to their faces.)

Pharmacologically, coke is a powerful short lived stimulant of the central nervous system, and also a local anaesthetic. The usual rebound from the charge is a corresponding melancholia and fatigue. Ecessive use will cause disrupted sleep, jitteriness, perhaps psychosis and, in rare cases, fatal convulsions. Withdrawal from a habit produces a psychological rather than major physical trauma.

Coke returned 30 years later as an accompaniment to heroin. Then in the mid-'70s sniffing was rediscovered, a development that opened the way for the snorting of the other white powder drugs.

IF THE CAREER of cocaine illustrates something of the force of politics and big business in shaping a drug's reputation, the story of heroin makes the point with perfect clarity.

Heroin is part of the family of drugs derived in large measure from the opium poppy. One of the parents is opium itself, which the British Government once pushed on the Chinese by force of arms. Through the Opium Wars of 1840 and 1856 we required the Chinese to accept our Empire-grown stock even though they complained of an addict population of some 15 million. When the Chinese finally succumbed, however, and grew their own stock, a portion of which reached the UK through Chinese sailors, there was unleashed in this country the most terrible indignation. Speaking of his visit to an East London smoking 'den' in 1904 a London County Council inspector noted: 'Oriental cunning and cruelty . . . was hallmarked on every countenance. Until my visit to the Asiatic Sailors' Home, I had always considered some of the Jewish inhabitants of Whitechapel to be the worst type of humanity I had ever seen.'

In fact Europe had long been familiar with opium products — but as laudanum, a mixture of opium and alcohol. Such tinctures were popular from medieval to late Victorian times and regarded as an unrivalled therapy for pain, coughs, diarrhoea and menstrual cramps.

More curious still than our laudanum blind spot was a sequence of pharmacological 'breakthroughs' that betray either the stupidity or the thorough corruptness of the medical community. In 1805 the alkaloid morphine was first isolated from opium. Twenty years later it was being marketed as a cure for addiction to its parent, even though it is some ten times more potent. In 1874 heroin came along and this was pushed as a cure for morphine addiction, even though it is four times more potent; 40 times more so than opium. (The word 'heroin' comes from the German *heroisch*, meaning heroic or powerful.) Today the line continues with the administration by the State of methadone as a cure for heroin addiction. Methadone is as potent as heroin, longer acting and gives rise to a more protracted withdrawal syndrome. Like its predecessors, it too has reached the street as a drug of 'abuse'.

Could things have turned out differently? Am I taking an unduly sour view of politicians and druggists? The general public have always shown themselves to have an enormous and self-destructive appetite for the mind-benders, but look at the role heroin played in America's South East Asian adventure of the '60s/'70s.

The US decided to finance the Chinese Nationalists, who developed the modern heroin trade of the Golden Triangle. Not just finance them but build them a road so that their drug traffic might be expedited through Thailand and eventually through to the US mainland itself. The US took this action because the Nationalists — by all accounts a brutal mob of exploiters and torturers of the indigenous people — were anti-communist.

None of the foregoing is to suggest that the 'narcotics' are not potentially dangerous substances. It is as inane to champion the idea that Third World drugs are good because they come from the Third World as it is to think only ill of Western-made 'synthetics'. But the situation we have yet to get used to is that people, in their masses, are reaching for a more varied psychoactive charge than that offered by the traditional booze, fags and caffeine.

As a culture we have so far refused to receive that message, preferring to treat the illicit market, valued at around £8 million a week, as an aberration to be screamed at.

Andrew Tyler is the author of Street Drugs, *published this January by New English Library, £3.50.*

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Organist extraordinary

Justin Wintle

The Grain of the Voice
ROLAND BARTHES trans. LINDA COVERDALE
Cape £25
The Responsibility of Forms
ROLAND BARTHES trans. RICHARD HOWARD
Blackwell £19.50

Roland Barthes: 'arch-structuralist, proto-deconstructionist, well-dressed iconoclast.'

WE ARE IN France, *en vacances*. The chapel, which is of uncertain denomination (high Protestant or low Catholic?), is full: the pews are packed with critics: with literati, sociologists, anthropologists, culturologists of all sorts. Here and there whispers are exchanged — the odd novelist is present, the odd lithographer. In general though the mood is one of hushed anticipation. Behind us the organ murmurs extended, shifting chords.

As we wait the music changes, gives way to sharp jabs of sound, head-turning staccato clusters. Something is awry, but only a fragment of the organist's long-nosed stockinged lozenge of a face is visible in the angled shaving mirror placed above the console in the loft. Yet, even from this, it is obvious that Monsieur Barthes is largely impervious to the congregation below.

Soon the noise is really out of hand. There are recognisable snatches in there (phrases from Nietzsche, phrases from Freud), but more and more he extemporises, as though, out of written music, he were endeavouring to create sounds that will explain to us the exact mechanical construction of the organ itself; as though by listening we should ascertain the precise position of each one of the many hundreds of crooked pipes within the encasement.

Some of the congregation rise to their feet shouting, punching the air with their fists. Do they like what they hear? The answer, in some cases, is yes. Several sections of the congregation have picked up their benches and turned them around so that now they *face the organ*. But, while these have recognised that the service is (after all) a concert, the rest (the majority) reseat themselves and stare forward, angry and uncomprehending. When will the man shut up? When will someone shoot him? For the music is unrelenting, both in its intricacy and in its purpose. The organist's project is no longer an explication of his instrument, but a quest for the combination of notes and modes that will disintegrate the very walls around us.

It doesn't quite work of course (it never has), but down below the divisions harden. Those who approve cheer and clap. Those who don't leave, until, with only supporters remaining, an insistent *om* is heard on the diapason; while in the upper registers a Buddhist chant is laced with an Indian melody. 'Isn't it lunchtime?' says one disciple to another. In small groups they too depart.

Monsieur Barthes realises that he is alone in the building. His hands withdraw from the three keyboards, his scores slide into their leather satchel and the organist descends to earth. He closes the chapel door behind him and steps smartly into the street outside. A van comes by, attempts to swerve, but . . . But give or take an hour the man is dead.

The apotheosis of Roland Barthes (arch-structuralist, proto-deconstructionist, well-dressed iconoclast and organist *extraordinaire*) begins. Back inside the chapel many pages stream from the organ loft, landing haphazardly on polished pew and dusted floor. These are the first posthumous works: *The Grain of the Voice* ('Interviews 1962-1980') and *The Responsibility of Forms* ('Critical Essays on Music, Art and Representation', 1961-1980). Doubtless others will follow. But, for now, its differences buried, the congregation is ready to reconvene.

MUCH HAS BEEN made of Barthes the modernist, and something has been made of Barthes the post-modern, but he was also a displaced medieval. (Umberto Eco: 'Soon the post-modern category will include Homer.') He was *par excellence* a campaigner on the side of the angels in the war between civilisation and culture, his reputation established chiefly by his structuralist exposures (de-mystifications) of ideology at work not only through literary and artistic production, but in every field where signs are operated (from packets of detergent to clothing). In a series of brilliant books (*Mythologies, S/Z, The Fashion System*) he elaborated a critical apparatus (based in semiotics) which was capable of taking on anything and everything. ('Everything is language,' he tells Jean Ristat in 1972.)

To the immense delight of the Left, critical discourse was reformulated in two specific ways: it was broadened into an almost infinite field of enquiry, but it was also used to demolish seemingly secure hierarchies. In particular the role of the reader was brought to the fore: the work of art (the novel, the painting) was no longer a locus of settled (therefore sanctioned) truths, but a testing bed for the consumer's own psychology. At his most extreme (Barthes the cultural revolutionary) he showed us that literature, stripped of its aura, of its self-importance, is a service industry like any other.

A central aspect of this undertaking was Barthes' insistence that there are no central aspects. Language is a lexicon: meaning derives only from the conglomeration of signs, from the proliferation of words. Every mode of communication is no more (and no less) than a system. It is precisely these themes however that are medieval. Without resorting to wider theological speculation, Barthes is trapped in a universe where nominalism rules supreme. By the early 1970s his impeccable virtuosity is in retreat. Various attempts at escape are made, but each turns out a variation of some previous ploy. In particular, an addiction to terminologies takes hold of him.

Certain terminologies are ever-present (notably his semiotic godhead of sign, signifier and signified), others are used more opportunistically. (In a long and convoluted

'The vice most fatal to the statesman is virtue'
—Anatole France

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essay on Cy Twolmby, Barthes launches into his subject by recalling different words for 'event' employed by the Greeks: *pragma, tyché, telos, apodeston, drama*.) At the same time the flavours of the addiction become excessive: the writing is too scrupulous, too painstaking, too protective, too ludic, too much a thing in itself. But also at the same time, and increasingly toward the end of his life (tragically he *was* knocked down by a passing vehicle in Paris), we witness two new strains: on the one hand he insists on his 'marginality' (cultural revolution is continuous and therefore must always be only subversive). Secondly, and more dangerously, his attention wanders into other people's gardens: he is captivated by Japan (Zen), he is enthralled by certain Hindu philosophies, he is interested in Buddhism. Always a pathological ironist, Barthes becomes (by degrees) the immersed hedonist: the lapsed Protestant finally yields to the Catholic world around him.

Neither *The Grain of the Voice* nor *The Responsibility of Forms* will do very much to revise opinion about Barthes' critical and literary persona, though both books (beautifully translated) have something to recommend them. The interviews (39 of them) highlight the contours of Barthes' evolution, albeit via an indigestion of repetition. On pages 244 and 245 are the two most penetrating paragraphs on surrealism I can recall having read. The essays likewise testify to the range of Barthes' enquiry, though they are not as thematically coherent as their edited arrangement implies, and there is no indication of their original provenance. Even so, there are several individual treats, especially 'The Greek Theatre', which should be required reading, a splendid 'Acrimboldo' and a ravishing autopsy on the artist Réquichot. Also included are some seminal words on Eisenstein and seven very unseminal essays on musical topics. Both volumes are unindexed, which is wretched, though if they lead the reader back to Barthes, and back to the major oeuvres, they will have done their job. □

Sex made simple

Roz Kaveney

Sexual Desire
ROGER SCRUTON *Weidenfeld* £18.95 & £8.95

SOME YEARS AGO, when the waiter at a Brighton hotel brought our cream teas, my barrister friend took one look at the watery cream (the menu specified whipped) and the single scone (the menu specified the plural) and bounced at the manager with a fiercely merry cry of 'Trades Description Act'. A not entirely dissimilar response seems appropriate to Roger Scruton's *Sexual Desire — a philosophical investigation*. Like the hotel menu, the title contains a number of special private meanings and implied mental reservations, which may satisfy the purveyor but hardly the punter.

This book forms a part of Dr Scruton's endless scurrying campaign to reform the nation's intellectual morals and, as such, the concept of philosophical investigation means something rather other. Here, as elsewhere in his work, the earnest academic and the dedicated servant of a political faction change hats with a regularity, speed and dexterity which would have been the envy of the late Tommy Cooper. In his *Meaning of Conservatism*, Dr Scruton, in a moment of self-baring, explains how the committed conservative 'might in all conscience seek to propagate the ideology which sustains the social order, whether or not there is a reality that corresponds to it'. There are many ways of describing this service to the state, but the honest working man, to whose good sense and judgment Scruton so often affects to defer, would tend, I think, to call it telling porky pies.

In that same earlier text, Scruton talked of justifying 'the inarticulate feelings [about the sexual life] of the common citizen . . . which grow from the constraints of family life, and the abstinence attendant on a working life' — the last phrase presumably referring to the traditional managerial scheme of stopping the workers screwing around as a way of keeping them on the job. In that welter of abstract nouns, as invaluable to the moral philosopher as lists of chemicals to the purveyor of snake oil, he attempts to do so. Desire is praised and distinguished from lust (nasty) and love (a bit wet); desire is directed at a single person and is a good thing because it leads to family life, foundation of social order. Much of what he says is partly true of a lot of people a lot of the time, of course, but in ways more complex and ambivalent than he would like to think. His occasional readings of literary texts indicate unpreparedness to accept the polysemous quality of texts; there is a repellent absolutism in his insistence that the human emotions he anatomises be only one thing at a time and forever.

My parents failed to set me to philosophy when young and this book leaves me inarticulately grateful for this; still, even to one untrained in thinking, there are obvious objections to Scruton's models of emotional life. His account of what he calls desire emphasises that mutuality without which attentions become intrusions. What then of that situation beloved of opera libretti and teenage romance comics where A loves B, who returns that love and desire, yet for reasons of plot mechanism dissembles that love, whose return A can only intuit? Is A guilty of lust, since at the level of rationality, he or she has no way of knowing the truth? And if so, when the situation changes and the return of love is admitted, how is A's unchanging emotion to change category? The point surely is that, rather than the separate entity Scruton would maintain, desire is an interface between love and lust, a point at which two feelings, both of them morally neutral, blend in proportions which vary according to the individual and the occasion. His clear distinction exists in order to make of desire a quality he can define as he will in order to promote his political projects.

Scruton sneers, reasonably enough, at the

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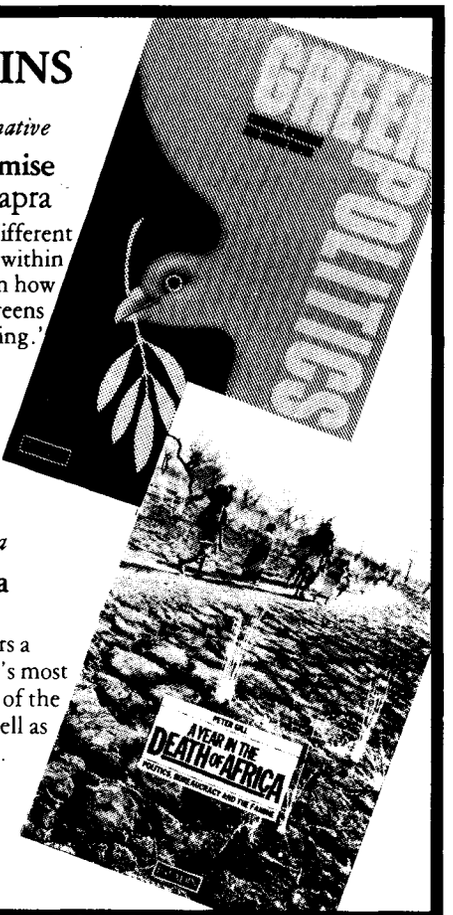

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dehumanising side of writers like Masters and Johnson, with their emphasis on technique; it should not be forgotten, though, that research of their kind — like the historiography of Foucault, another Scruton villain — poses a yardstick against which his intuited *a priori* statements about common human experience can be judged. For him, the assumption that we have a right to experience ecstasy or release is an unfortunate result of the democratic spirit. In a memorable passage, he berates women who finger themselves to orgasm in the presence of their lover — 'Such a person affronts her lover with the obscene display of her body' — so don't do it, girls, OK? Sex is not for enjoyment; it is a stern and serious duty in the course of which people are supposed to keep a straight face. (A tendency to the ludicrous is also to be found in Scruton's powerfully bad novel *Fortnight's Anger*, whose hero, persuaded in a moment of weakness to fellate his analyst, feels his sexual nature irredeemably spoiled.) Scruton flirts with condemnation (this is left at times unclear by verbal ambiguities caused by his barbarous insistence on the use of the male as a general third-person pronoun) of homosexuality — for lacking a sense of mystery and difference — but never commits himself. Male lust is criticised as predatory and dangerous on the strengh of a single scene from Proust; he characterises women loving women as slightly sad and twee on the strength of a poem of Sappho — entirely other conclusions might be drawn from Colette, Rita Mae Brown or a visit to the Bell in King's Cross on a Saturday night. Scruton is determined to represent all female desire as clinging, passive and non-promiscuous and little things like literature and life are not going to stand in his way.

He wishes, of course, to smash feminism. 'The energy released when man and woman come together is proportional to the distance which divides them when they are apart' — yes, but can you run the fridge off it? He berates feminists for ignoring 'scientific fact' about gender difference; science is a good thing when it agrees with him. He ticks off a straw sociobiologist for bad intellectual manners, but felinely allows his sexist conclusions to stand. Scruton talks admiringly of the way they managed women's education in 18th-century France, but does not quite talk of sending women back to the home, not this time. His talk of mystery and difference is used to demolish, he thinks, a straw woman's plea for abstract rights to respect; to attack, as he would logically wish to, pleas for practical rights like equal pay would call on Scruton to be more of a public skunk than he is prepared to be.

Scruton is an aesthetician; he wants to reduce ordinary human muddle to the sterile neatness of a particular sort of bachelor kitchen. The prevailing tone of his book is one of spite — and I do know about pots and kettles — to lives he does not understand and wishes to remould. This is a foggy and pompous book, full of wilful mistatements of fact and misinterpretations of texts; the only thing which redeems it is Scruton's tendency to shoot himself, and his cause, in the foot. □

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FICTION

Grace and fate

Glyn Hughes

The Image and Other Stories
ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER *Cape* £9.95
Carpenter's Gothic
WILLIAM GADDIS *Deutsch* £8.95
Lake Wobegon Days
GARRISON KEILLOR *Faber* £9.95

SINGER'S STORIES have the artlessness and charm of folk tales. Many of them are about ancient Poland and apparently already shaped by passing from mouth to mouth before being set down. Ancient Poland can be medieval, or the country that was invaded by the Nazis, for Bohemian café-artists and court Jews are equally remote, or equally alive, in this wise old author's mind.

Such stories mix with ones about contemporary New York and these also seem to belong to the genre of old folk tales because of the way in which they are told. Singer distances himself with the device of making them secondhand: a stranger, one who is himself perhaps a miraculous survivor of the Holocaust, phones him or comes to his office, urgent to tell an 'unbelievable' story. You can see the twinkle in Singer's eye. In 'Confused' an elderly writer returns from a lecture tour, to exchange one set of confusions for another when female admirers of his literature arbitrarily upset his life. Singer tells this not untypical contemporary author's story in the same manner as Aunt Yentl talking about old Poland to while away the hours by the stove or on the porch. An old man seems to be trusting you, and only you, with his secrets, or those of others, bending your ear with intimacies and with fairy tales for adults.

They achieve 'artlessness' through an extreme refinement of art. They charm because of the grip exerted upon us all, when we come to think of it, by our pitiful ignorance before their great theme: which bits of our lives are our own and which directed by the hand of destiny? The route of every plot is along that razor edge and the destination is always the same. The Angel of Death makes his, or her, appearance seven times in the first 140 pages,

Among this week's contributors:

Justin Wintle is the author of *Paradise for Hire* and *Mortadella* and the editor of *Makers of Modern Culture* and *Makers of Nineteenth Century Culture.*

Glyn Hughes's novels include *Where I Used to Play on the Green.*

Glyn Ford is MEP for Greater Manchester East.

Steven Rose is Professor of Biology at the Open University; his most recent book is *Not in Our Genes* (co-authored).

Correction: *Railroaded*, reviewed last week, is published by Faber and not by Pluto Press.

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and then I stopped counting.

'Belief in God and His Providence is the very essence of literature', Singer writes. 'It tells us that causality is nothing but a mask on the face of destiny. Man is constantly watched by powers that seem to know all his desires and complications. He has free choice, but he is also being led by a mysterious hand. Literature is the story of love and fate . . .'

In 'Confused' everything seems arbitrary and wilful, in the darkness of ignorance, but at the end the put-upon author remarks, 'Not all maladies must be cured. Often the sickness tastes better than the remedy . . . And when they kiss me before I board the plane back home . . . I kiss back and tell them all the same words: "When you happen to visit New York City, come to see me if I'm still alive".'

Life ceases to be confusing when you see what directs it.

But what is the greater hand directing the destinies of the vituperative contestants in William Gaddis's **Carpenter's Gothic**?

Carpenter's Gothic, the author explains in the penultimate chapter, is a style of domestic architecture in which 'country architects and carpenters' adapted standard pattern-books for their customers.

> The whole inspiration of medieval Gothic but the poor fellows didn't have it . . . All they had were the simple dependable old materials, the wood and their hammers and saws and their own clumsy ingenuity bringing those grandiose visions the masters had left behind down to a human scale with their own little inventions . . .

Where Singer finds God giving design to petty wilful acts, Gaddis's characters — Paul a near-psychopathic Vietnam veteran, Liz his drowning wife, Billy her wild brother — are locked on their Carpenter-Gothic set but are manipulated by Destiny in the form of the most obscenely-worldly off-stage events. They make a great and comic noise, the whole book progresses at a rich and reckless pace, but what truly affects their lives happens out of their sight or at least their focus, and therein lies the pathos, the scale, the tragedy and the moral of the story. One of the most important *effective* characters, the corrupt Evangelist Elton Ude, never actually appears, although he is fully realised. In Greek drama it was the messenger but here it is the telephone that primes the action. World events and ideologies provide a pattern-book, one made not of fretwork but of the junk-language of politics and religion, and with it these poor characters improvise their lives. It is a language that inflates us with the illusion that we know everything happening on earth, but in fact it fractures our concentration on what is under our noses.

Gaddis is an author up-to-date enough to allow film to take over in peace what it can do better than the novel. Visual descriptions, which in a pre-film novel might take up a page and a half in order to create a mood or direction, are reduced to such rudiments that when they appear one is surprised at how good Gaddis is at them. The novel is conveyed through direct speech (and any aspiring author who wants to learn the mechanics of it couldn't do better than study *Carpenter's Gothic*) but Gaddis gains immediacy through not often making it clear who is speaking. Until one gets used to it, it can seem like reading the words of a film without being able to see the pictures. It makes for a difficult read, but a rewarding and unique one, and not for nothing does Gaddis apparently spend ten years on each novel.

I got more bellyfuls of laughter, among other emotions, from a few pages of *Carpenter's Gothic* than I did from all of **Lake Wobegon Days**. This book has been so much praised that it can surely bear a dissenting voice. That I didn't find it very funny might be my own peculiarity, but a very good novel I don't believe it to be, although it might be a good source book of quasi-documentary stories. The book is based upon an extremely popular American radio programme, and as such had a head-start towards its bestsellerdom.

Whereas in *Carpenter's Gothic* the small locale of a house on the Hudson River genuinely reaches out to what Robert Lowell called 'the sore spots of the earth', *Lake Wobegon* retreats into its satisfactions with small-town values. Moreover, the author too often relies upon a winsome and 'fetching' small boy's view of the world. It is this sort of thing that captures a readership and could even form a cult. But does it make for the high qualities that some are claiming for the book? It is small-town values that make the US such a menace with the arsenal it has at its command. That's not funny. □

For kicks

Judith Williamson

Damaged Gods
JULIE BURCHILL *Century* £8.95

THE TITLE of this book has a strangely ambiguous bearing on its content: it's hard to tell whether the gods were damaged before, or after, Julie Burchill was unleashed on them.

The gods in question are the 'cults and heroes reappraised' of the subtitle; the six essays deal with, broadly speaking, cults concerning women, youth, children, sports, blacks and entertainment. 'Reappraised' is a very un-Burchill euphemism for putting the boot in.

For Burchill attacks just about everything she mentions; and yet, by the end of a chapter, she looks back nostalgically at the things she was attacking at the beginning of it. The Fifties, Sixties and Seventies youth cults will be ravaged by her verbal onslaught; and then, in a sudden twist, the Eighties will be made to look like a new low compared to the relatively radical movements of earlier times — except that we've just been shown how rotten *they* were, too. It's the same pattern in every section: by the end of the chapter on black public figures, 'earlier' black artists with more integrity — 'Ross, Poitier, Ali, Warwick, Wonder' — are invoked to provide a favourable comparison with the Jackson/Prince superstars. But, by this time, it's hard to remember what good is left of them,

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since the chapter has been one long acid bath.

This lack of any consistent perspective leaves you with the sensation of stepping off some giddying fairground ride. There's nothing inherently wrong with internal inconsistency; nowadays, few people pretend to a coherent subject-position. But the paradox is that Burchill's publicity, at least, claims this for her: 'a brilliant and totally original world view'. The absence of a bibliography could be taken as a sign of original thought, but the blurb might have added that the 'world view' is a constantly changing one. A random example: Burchill attacks Germaine Greer for her apparent disaffection with 'all things Western', but the apocalyptic climax to her own book is an exactly similar sentiment (certainly well-justified); she describes the Western world of today as one where 'only diversion is left' — diversion being media and entertainment.

It is surprising that Burchill is so anti-entertainment, when she is so entertaining herself. Her writing is clever, condensed, constantly witty: but it does get rather wearing. Presumably this is one of the hazards of being a professional 'controversialist'. As the jacket blurb puts it: 'Julie Burchill is predictable only in her unpredictability.' You could remove the 'only'.

Among the self-consciously unpredictable points are really acute observations. Burchill uses language as a form of constant comment, with an apt adjective serving the purpose of several sentences of analysis. She has a real talent for finding the phrase that describes a phenomenon in a particularly telling way. But this way of analysing people and politics has its drawbacks, for the predominance of a descriptive mode makes Burchill peculiarly obsessed with appearances — literally, with how people look. 'Born Again Cows', her essay on essentialist feminists, reads like a list of beauty problems: women who applaud 'female' virtues have flat chests and facial hair; the radical feminists are ill and ugly and don't know 'what it is to feel attraction, and to attract'; Earth Mother types have thick ankles. Yik! Erin Pizzey has had the nerve to marry a 'swarthy young Semitic stud'; Burchill herself is obsessed with the size and beauty of black men, particularly Black Panthers, whom she pronounces 'handsome in any context', and she muses on the extraordinary potential for dignity in the black man.

It is at moments like these — when Burchill naively re-cycles the social stereotypes she's meant to be criticising — that the problem of a string of 'opinions' is particularly apparent. All her judgments come across as a matter of personal taste, which means one ends up knowing more about Julie Burchill than about the subjects covered. But perhaps she is a damaged god, too. □

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Shorter reviews

The Second World War Diary of Hugh Dalton

ed. BEN PIMLOTT *Cape* £40

After having read, reviewed and acclaimed Ben Pimlott's biography of Hugh Dalton I began to feel that I knew as much about Hugh Dalton as ever I wanted. Like Wagner's *Meistersinger*, it went on about three minutes too long for perfect comfort and enjoyment. Now reading Dalton's wartime diary (and another volume on pre- and post-war is to follow) dislike of Dalton grew and *ennui* threatened. Then suddenly I found it really fun to read simply because my mind rebelled and began to play an existentialist counter-factual game: imagining what all the other great men and civil servants he met said about him, what their hindsight might have been.

I mean to say, 'this is a unique and important record of wartime events by the only member of the wartime Government known to have kept a full diary', etc. Almost every day there is a full and lively account not merely of his own work in setting up the Special Operations Executive and then at the Board of Trade (when Churchill, who detested the booming Etonian class traitor, kicked him upstairs), but of wartime politics in general. He wrote with verve and gusto and is far more entertaining than C.P. Snow's novels. It should be a source, with minimal updating, for many *Yes Minister* scripts (they *must* read it). But, though Pimlott warns that Dalton is self-dramatising and dictated a good deal of the diary some days later (and dictation can be very self-dramatising), he doesn't really warn or ponder enough how deceptive diaries can be.

There is a literary cult of the 'diary' as authenticity, but as many people have used them for image making, for future publication and fame as ever have used them at God's command for chastening self-assessment. Ben Pimlott has worked very hard to footnote all the characters Dalton mentions. I wish he had thought as hard about what such a diary is. However, all Alliance politicians *must* buy this book, not just to set them back 40 quid but to understand how difficult and horrid coalitions can be.

Bernard Crick

Darwin's Metaphor

ROBERT M. YOUNG *Cambridge* £27.50 & £9.95

In the 1960s Bob Young was an American-trained, Cambridge-based historian of science. His book of the time, on the rise of 19th-century brain science and psychology, still remains a standard text. Radicalised by 1968 and its aftermath, Young began increasingly to struggle against the confines of a narrowly 'internalist' interpretation of science, which saw it as an intellectual pursuit divorced from its social milieu. He left Cambridge security to live more hazardously freelance in London and during the 1970s became the focus of one tendency of the nascent radical science movement. For Young and his followers in the mid-Seventies, scientific knowledge ceased to have any autonomy outside the social context which produced it: 'science *is* social relations.' As the Seventies wore on, the group's position, influenced by Braverman's writings, shifted to one in which science must be understood as part of a labour process which generates it. Into the dourer Eighties, Young's *Radical Science Journal* has transmogrified into *Free Associations* and his concerns have shifted towards the psychoanalytic.

During his period of transformation from scholar to guru, Young's historical writing centred on Darwin and the evolutionary debates of the 19th century, with their contemporary echoes around sociobiology. *Darwin's Metaphor* belatedly brings together a series of his essays from the early Seventies, fascinatingly reflecting Young's personal intellectual/political pilgrimage. Their central argument is that the scientific debates over evolution cannot be separated from the political, ideological and theological context of the period. This is not now likely to strike anyone as surprising — and one of the interests of the collection is Young's reminder of just *how* difficult this was for the last generation of historians of science to accept.

Some of the essays, such as that on Darwin's metaphor of selection itself, are now transcended by, for instance, Gillian Beer's excellent *Darwin's Plots*. But the final, long essay on 'Man's place in nature', a sort of history of the history of science, remains a major achievement. It is a debate with the internalist tradition of scientific historiography, with the philosophers and sociologists of science of the 1960s and early '70s, charting Young's own growing concern with the relations of science and ideology; a way station on his journey. It is a pity the book has taken so long to come out. But better late than never.

Steven Rose

Making Sense of Europe

CHRISTOPHER TUGENDHAT *Viking* £9.95

Christopher Tugendhat served for eight years as one of Britain's two European Commissioners. For him the federal dream of a United States of Europe is now dead. The possibility of it was the 'white lie' that launched the crusade but it should now be abandoned in favour of a slow growing together through habitual co-operation and consensus. This desertion of idealism for pragmatism is a profoundly conservative and Euro-centred one.

He believes that the future directors of Europe Ltd. should be the Council of Ministers, with the Commission as the managers and the Parliament as a toothless, irrevelant body that would make the Post Office Users Consultative Council appear in comparison a major power base. The task is to tear down the barriers to create an internal market 'in which management can consider the Community as a single market', although 'such questions as . . . whether to encourage worker participation should be left to the individual countries'. The residue of exchange controls should go and those states still outside the European monetary system should leap aboard. The Common Agricultural Policy will be brought to heel with a combination of quotas and price reductions. A European security area must be established to make Europe safe for defence contractors, although, unfortunately, some Community members are so unreliable that this will have to be marshalled not by the Council of Ministers but by resurrecting the all-but-defunct Western European Union. For Tugendhat, the Community must be 'able to convince its shareholders of its usefulness on a continuing basis'.

Making Sense of Europe contains a monolithic view of society that simply ignores regional and class divisions. It does not offer anything for the UK as a whole. The 'shareholders' among the working class and in the regions will obtain a poor return on their investments. Those in the Labour Movement who increasingly argue that our future lies in co-ordinating socialist reflation across Europe will find little that makes sense in this vision of Europe. For them another course needs plotting, one that avoids the Scylla of the current impotence and waste and the Charybdis of Tugendhat's late-capitalist utopia.

Glyn Ford

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Meryl Streep goes walkabout in *Out of Africa*

FILMS

White woman's burden

John Coleman

Out of Africa (PG)
Empire; Screen on the Green; ABC, Fulham Road
Ran (15)
Curzon West End; Screen on the Hill; Gate, Notting Hill

A FUNNY THING happened to me a couple of hours ago as I was about to leave the cinema. Turning to a good and trusted friend, I blurted something like, 'Any five pages from her memoir give you a better feeling of the place and its people . . .', only to break off: my companion was still wiping away tears.

So, drawing a little on Karen Blixen's marvellous 1937 book of the same name, rather more on biographies of her and of her aristocratic English lover, and perhaps most on scriptwriter Kurt Luedtke's imagination, Sydney Pollack's **Out of Africa** may well be exactly what you are looking for: a long, romantic movie set in exotic landscapes distanced by time, Kenya from 1914 through the Twenties, with fine performances by Meryl Streep as self-willed Baroness Blixen and Robert Redford as her Eton-and-Oxford *amour*, Denys Finch Hatton. That Denys was in life 16 years older than Karen and damn near bald is just one of the facts not needed on this particular voyage. And, once reconciled to a box-office distortion and compression of true incidents in real lives, one can point to a few strengths.

As the philandering Baron (she brought the money, he the title), Klaus Maria Brandauer brings a bantering edge to some good lines: 'I wondered what colour you'd wear,' he says to newly arrived Karen just before their swift marriage ceremony. 'It's *ivory*,' she says, half-defensively, half-amused. She's soon to find he has planted coffee, against their agreement, and, somewhat later, that he has given her syphilis. Punches are not pulled, even if John Barry's lush, swooning score keeps leaning into Mills & Boon. Karen, only later to become Isak Dinesen, writer, is a woman of steely parts as well as compassion, persuading a lad with ulcered legs to go to hospital, building a school against opposition from whites and blacks alike, giving her Baron the divorce he wants, trekking off during the war (when women and children are to be sent to Nairobi for safety) to meet up with Lord Delamere (Michael Gough) and his men, working herself into the ground. Her progression from milady shooing natives off her crates of Limoges to a woman prepared to go on her knees before the new Governor, beseeching land for the beloved Kikuyu she is finally leaving, is finely graded.

But, at the heart of it all, her difficult relationship with Finch Hatton (who plays gramophone Mozart to monkeys — the real Denys was a Stravinsky man) swamps her profound interest in and sympathy for what she calls in her memoir 'the Natives'; out of Africa, indeed, for much of the time, even while we are shown great vistas, galloping fauna, clusters of black people. It is Denys's refusal to be tied down, his off-beat unfettered lifestyle (excellently conveyed by Redford, often by ducking her questions), that is offered as teaching her something maybe more important than any experience of Africa. And he is killed piloting his Gypsy Moth biplane, en route to picking her up to fly her to Mombasa, from where she is returning to Denmark for good. And she reads verses at his funeral ceremony. And actual and fictional happenings are telescoped in the drawn-out close: to make what, for me, is a sentimental wallow, giving the lie to observations of acerbity and spiritual toughness elsewhere, tailor-made for Streep's extraordinary talent and hinting at an altogether different and spikier film.

Akira Kurosawa's film version of *Macbeth*, called *Throne of Blood* over here, stays in the mind as a formidable distillation. That was in 1957. Now the 76-year-old master has turned several cameras on *King Lear*. **Ran**, which I am told means 'wretchedness', is the munificently spectacular but deucedly odd outcome, with moments of visual splendour and one staggeringly effective notion. Sixteenth-century Japan, one hazards, and Lord Hidetora (Tatsuya Nakadai) — after a wild boar hunt which has him reflecting on waning powers — decides to hand over authority to his eldest son, Taro. Jiro will get the Second Castle, Saburo the Third: their father will stay with them in turn. Young Saburo (the son taking, as it were, the Cordelia role), fearful for his aged parent, speaks out and is banished. There is a Kent-figure, Tangu, also banished, who chooses rather disguise and watching over old Hidetora. So far, so *Lear*, with obvious gender-switches. But this king has a cruel, murky past, having sacked the castle of Taro's wife, killed her parents, gouged out her brother's eyes. His remorse, as he is spurned and staggers about with his Fool (played in woman's garb by a transvestite from cabaret, Peter), turns to madness. A sheltering hut proves occupied by that blinded but forgiving brother, who courteously plays the flute.

Machinations; second son kills the first in battle; the dead man's wife, Lady Kaede, an even blood-thirstier Lady Macbeth, seduces brother-in-law Jiro with hurtling eroticism in the film's most macabre sequence; warriors, with blue, red, yellow banners confusingly, bloodily crowd the screen with arrows, spears, even guns. Last treacheries: and deaths, *Lear*-style; yet — for all the obvious correspondences — this is far from Shakespeare, closer to Kurosawa's own 1980 *Kagemusha*: a feast for the eyes but a letdown for the mind seeking other richnesses.

And those anxiously awaiting word on Godard's defective *Detective* must wait till next week, when all shall be revealed. All? I must be joking.

DESIGN

Steamed up

Jules Lubbock

SPARE A THOUGHT for the humble electric kettle. A kettle crisis has forced me to do so. In the past two years our household has been through four kettles at a cost of £60.

It began when we gave our traditional chrome kettle — the sort with a spout, handle, lid and thermostat — to our daughter, replacing it with a gleaming white German jug-kettle. Our old one had a minor eccentricity: occasionally it would switch itself off before boiling. The remedy was simply to hold down the switch.

For a while the new kettle was a delight. It looked good. The pure white cylinder was the

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ultimate evolution from the electrified kettle-on-the-hob. The handle on the side enabled the lid to be easily removed for filling; its level-gauge made it simple to fill with one cupful of water, saving time and electricity, as the advertisements said — and it did not switch off too soon. Until we noticed that every morning there was a pool of water on the worktop. We tried plugging the hole with adhesives, but to no avail. The smart new kettle now stood on a saucer or a tea-towel and had to be emptied every night.

A year later we replaced it. Cautiously we chose a traditional design 'Made in Britain'. Less wisely, instead of reverting to the chrome job, we bought a white one with a red handle which refused to work at all unless it was filled completely, wasting more time and electricity than ever before.

The family split. For the sake of speed — and because its by-now multiple defects had endeared it to me — I retrieved the jug-kettle. Others were loyal to the new one. Finally, the kettle crisis was solved by a small electrical shop, as distinct from the chain stores whence the others had come, whose proprietor was something of a connoisseur in kettles and admitted that the German jug-kettle was a disaster, recommending a British jug-kettle, which works, although its shape is less pure. We were lucky — other victims are into their seventh kettle.

When Britain's sole surviving motor manufacturer is being flogged off in lots, the design of kettles may seem a frivolous subject. Yet both employ mature technologies of a similar vintage and the electrification of kitchens has had as dramatic an effect on us as the car. Besides, to their manufacturers, kettles are certainly not frivolous. By redesigning them — one is called 'The Designer' kettle — they have persuaded me, among others, to replace one thing which lasts a lifetime with two that don't.

For a kettle is more than a kettle. It is used in the kitchen — and fitted kitchens are a £500m. market where the name of the game is style and everything has to match. Kitchens, in turn, are part of the £7 billion market in household durables (so called); $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of consumer expenditure and 2 per cent of Gross Domestic Product, not much less than we spend on cars — and, together with foreign holidays, videos, telephones and clothing, a growth market subject to ever-increasing import penetration.

Here one might start moralising about consumption, fashion and the creation of needs. I won't — although there's fun to be had from the ultimate status symbol in water-boiling apparatus, one which dispenses with electric kettles altogether: a £1,500 Aga and a copper kettle. Or there's post-modern architect Michael Graves's design with an angel on the spout for the price of four duff jug-kettles, or Richard Sapper's polished dome of stainless steel for less than the cost of three.

Such moralising, however, leads directly to More's and Morris's Utopian dream of a moneyless society, where all wear monastic habits and eat in communal refectories. How does one draw a sensible line between down-to-earth necessities and trivial luxuries? Morris permitted 'toys' like carved tobacco pipes. What would he say to a gas-lighter, or would he stick to matches, or a flint? These, of course, bear the same relation to his exotic vice, tobacco, as the kettle does to my equally exotic cup of tea. Isn't the production of perfectly innocent domestic gadgets and ornaments preferable to armaments — or is there some sinister link to be found between them?

And what are we to make of the arguments of those thoroughly non-Utopian managers of our economy who exhibit a comparable contempt for the mundane mass-productions of mature technology, like kettles, on the grounds that so mature an economy as Britain's ought to move hi-tech and up-market? Where does one draw the line here? We've stopped making motor-cycles altogether; we make only the very best quality hi-fi, in very small quantities. Perhaps we should stop baking bread. Oddly, this kind of logic does not seem to have been grasped by the managers of the advanced economies from whom we increasingly import such goods. At least we still make our own kettles — but then, no one else uses them. □

THEATRE

Family fare

Benedict Nightingale

Brighton Beach Memoirs
NEIL SIMON *Lyttelton*
Across from the Garden of Allah
CHARLES WOOD *Comedy*
The Saxon Shore
DAVID RUDKIN *Almeida*

WHY HAS NEIL SIMON never proved remotely as successful over here as in his native America? And what is his latest export to us doing at the National, rather than some local counterpart of the Broadway theatre at which it has flourished so long? Those two questions, untidily fused into one, kept nagging at my critical conscience as I sat in the Lyttelton last week, mildly chortling at **Brighton Beach Memoirs** and listening to my neighbours do the same.

It's a semi-autobiographical piece, narrated by the pubescent Eugene, as aspiring writer, from key parts of the Jerome house in 1937, a more troubled time and place than is first apparent. There's growing tension between Ma and her kid sister, who, since the death of her husband, has moved in complete with brood. Sister's elder daughter, a would-be dancer, wants to audition for Broadway and is ragingly bitter when she's refused permission. Pa is a trudging salesman with financial and, as it turns out, cardiac problems. His elder son gambles away a week's wages at poker and makes to leave home in an ecstasy of guilt. Moreover, 37 cousins, Jewish refugees from the Nazis, look likely to arrive at any time. When Ma said, early in the evening, that 'this is a family, the world doesn't survive without families', we suspected her and our faith in the institution would be put the test; and it is, it is.

Say what you may against Simon, he has a superb command of his chosen form and style. He neither overtaxes his strengths nor forgets his limitations; he keeps to his proper station, aware that it is, so to speak, Brighton Beach and not Grand Central. Whether his elder brother is wising up Jerome to the significance of wet dreams, or their mother is delivering herself of yet another dour apophthegm about the family across the street ('stay on your side, that's what they have gutters for'), or the atmosphere round the supper-table is beginning to clot and curdle, Simon's wry sense of humour remains deftly in place, reliable as ever. Nor does he lack human understanding, even psychological insight, as is amply shown by the shifting relationship between the sisters, each of whom resents yet is gratified by the extension of their childhood power-patterns into adult life. Frances de la Tour, gawky near-despair just below her snap and bilious severity, and Alison Fiske chronicle all this with admirable deftness, and there's an amiably rumpled performance from Harry Towb as the put-upon paterfamilias. Altogether, Michael Rudman's production is what Michael Rudman productions usually are: intelligent and clear, unpretentiously sensitive and unostentatiously amusing.

Yet memories of other people's family studies and family sagas refused altogether to be banished, at least from my mind. I caught myself hankering for the darker comedy of Alan Ayckbourn, a writer endowed by his fairy godmother with a pessimism, an instinctive fatalism alien to America and certainly to humorous American playwrights. Less inevitably, I found myself thinking of Eduardo de Filippo, an expert at showing how cataclysmic household calamity can feel, how mountainous domestic molehills can be. There's a certain similarity, perhaps, between his tight, close, overheated Neapolitan families and the Jewish one we see here; but, if so, that only emphasises how relatively little Simon makes of its predicament. We don't feel the full awfulness of the threat supposedly faced by the Jeromes, that of falling apart. We don't believe they *could* fall apart. And, of course, they never do, being basically too fond of each other, too generous, too damned *nice*.

It's that soft-centredness, to be found in so much of Simon, which surely explains why his work has never attracted a great following here. We like more essential toughness, a bit more astringency; and quite right, too, at least in my view. And that brings me back to my opening. Now that *Pravda* is out of the repertoire, the contemporary work on offer in the National's two main houses is *A Chorus of Disapproval* and *Yonadab*, two commercially appealing plays by two commercially successful authors. Is the theatre really fulfilling its obligations to the present and future of drama by adding as undemanding an effort as *Brighton Beach* to that list? Is Simon plus Ayckbourn plus Shaffer a sufficiently enterprising selection of new work? The National can of course argue that it can't take the risks it would wish, thanks to the tightwad policies of the grant-giving bodies, starting

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with the government itself. But if it continues too long too far down this safe, sleek road, it may find it has proved itself not worth much subsidy in the first place.

The week also brought back beneath the arc lights two somewhat faded theatrical names, one much more impressively than the other. **The Garden of Allah** is likely to leave Charles Wood's admirers brooding nostalgically about his *Veterans*, another and funnier comedy about the movie business, or of those plays (*Dingo, H, Cockade*) in which he purposefully contrasted the swank of military myths with the brutishness of their reality. It too is a debunking exercise, of the glamour of Hollywood; but it's just not interesting, inventive or witty enough, whether it's concentrating on that subject or turning to the marriage of its principals, Nigel Hawthorne's glum screenwriter and his snarky wife, played with her usual adenoidal brio by Glenda Jackson. But David Rudkin's **The Saxon Shore** — well, that's quite a different matter.

Another writer might have chosen the location of Hadrian's wall at the time of Rome's fall — John Arden more or less did in *Island of the Mighty* — but who else would present us with Saxon settlers who somehow manage to be Christians by day, werewolves at night? The play's main weakness is that we learn too little of the heathen Celts, ex-subjects of King Lear, attempting to supplant these fascinating people. But its strengths are imaginative scope and command, energy and momentum, and a genuine apocalyptic feel, not without its resonances today. Add some fine acting and we've an evening that kept me (for one) wide-eyed, as at some exotic bedtime story told by a Scheherazade for our times. □

MUSIC

Rhythm method

Charles Fox

Grand master of jazz composition and theory, George Russell is touring Britain with a band including Django Bates, Palle Mikkelborg and Courtney Pine

THEORETICIANS often get thought of as dry, if not actually dusty. Yet the earliest person to concoct dictums about jazz, Jelly Roll Morton, was one of the music's gamier characters, not at all donnish. Similarly, George Russell, deviser of *The Lydian Concept of Tonal Organization*, challenging what Russell views as biased musical concepts, comes across on-stage as a man who throws himself into his task. What amounts to a retrospective of his musical career is linked by reminiscences about scuffling for a living in New York City. And he disdains a baton, conducting with a series of hand movements, all the while letting his body react — naturally, lissomly — to the rhythmic enticements.

Yet that reality should not seem strange. Russell started his musical career as a drummer. His first impact upon the jazz world was with 'Cubana Be, Cubana Bop', written for Dizzy Gillespie's big band in 1947 and originally featuring the Cuban conga player Chano Pozo. More recently, Russell has developed a new theory, Vertical Form, concerned not merely with layers of sound but layers of rhythm as well.

Jazz buffs, wary of hyperbole, may look askance when Russell is described — notably by the British critic, Max Harrison — as perhaps the most important jazz composer outside of Duke Ellington. But the records that Russell has made over four decades make that claim at least arguable. Establishing a reputation as a jazz composer, however, usually involves leading a band and nurturing a coterie of improvisers who will, as it were, inhabit the compositions. Ellington, Mingus, John Lewis — all have enjoyed the privilege of having an ensemble regularly at hand, ready to try out the latest work. Russell has never been in that situation, apart from a period during the early 1960s when, somewhat sporadically, he led a sextet. But he has always had his favourite players. And he is used to coping with ensembles brought together for records, broadcasts or concert tours (some of his busiest years were spent in Sweden doing exactly that). Now he leads a Euro-American band (ten Britons, three Americans, one Canadian and a Dane — the trumpeter Palle Mikkelborg),

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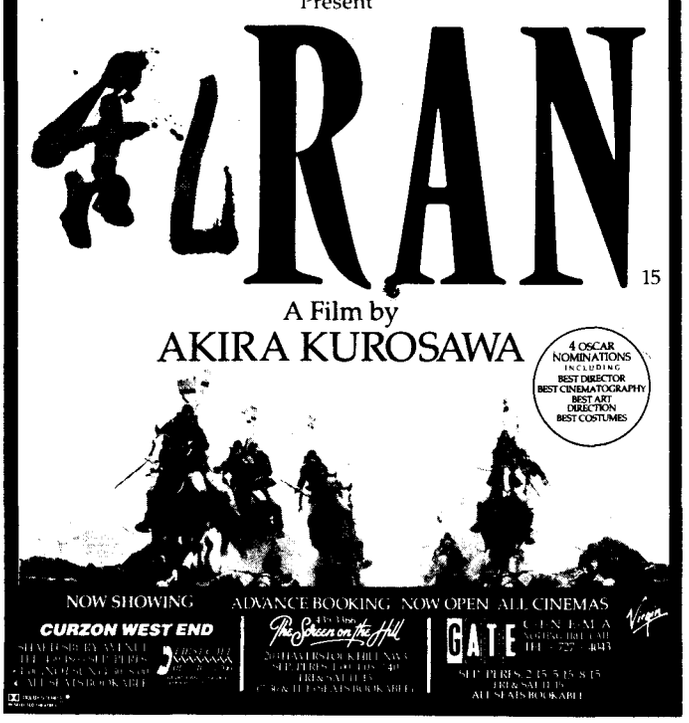
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touring on the Arts Council's Contemporary Music Network.

What seems most remarkable is not that this ad hoc group handles demanding charts so confidently (a few blemishes at the opening concert will have been smoothed out by now), but that they caught on to the rhythmic trickiness. Putting notes in the right places has always been the hardest discipline, as West Coast musicians reared in the swing tradition discovered when they found themselves recording alongside Charlie Parker. True, Russell brought his own drummer (Keith Copeland), bass guitarist (Bill Urmston) and keyboard player (Brad Hatfield), all operating at what Russell sees as the heart of the enterprise. And the conga drumming in 'Cubana Be, Cubana Bop' was supplied by a tape of Sabu Martinez, who took over after Chano Pozo was murdered in a Harlem Bar. But the cut and thrust of trumpets and trombones got carried off with the right kind of effrontery. And one of Django Bates's synthesizer solos, close to the end of the London concert, was a perfect instance of how electronics can be directed to human ends.

Courtney Pine, the best known of what one hopes will be a deluge of British-born black jazz musicians, looks as well as sounds like a classic tenor player, his stance combative, phrasing bonily, not at all backward about honking or hiccoughing whenever it seemed strategic. Less demonstrative but equally apt was the bass clarinet solo — querulous yet plaintive — that Chris Biscoe played soon after a buoyant piece, inspired by the work of a rapping New York D-J, Grandmaster Flash, had meandered into an excerpt from Russell's 'Electronic Sonata'. And there were solos from Chris Watson, avoiding the waterfall of notes that afflicts too many jazz guitarists.

Occupying the second half of the concert, 'The African Game' sets out to parallel the emergence and development of our species — just the kind of project normally beloved by artists feeling the need to bolster a fragile talent. But Russell avoids the programmatic pitfalls, his suite ending up without longueurs, although with a few chinks where hesitations can creep in. It is particularly handy that Russell's latest LP (Blue Note BT 85103) is devoted to 'The African Game', performed by a larger, all-American band. Certainly Courtney Pine does not suffer by comparison with George Garzone, his counterpart on the record. And in the brief but beguiling sequence describing the Birth of Consciousness, a duet for flugelhorn and guitar, Palle Mikkelborg offers an innovation, using a foot-pedal, adding as it were a ghostly after-presence. Happily, readers in the North still have a chance to catch the band, due to play in Southport on Saturday, Leeds on Sunday and Newcastle next Wednesday. □

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Christine Roche

Born-again walker

Nina Hibbin

NO WONDER I've been feeling so grotty in the mornings. For most of my life I've been getting out of bed the wrong way. I've also been sitting down and standing up and even walking the wrong way — and it has been doing dire things to my anatomy.

I was confronted with my past corporal sins — and was taught how to redress them — on the terrace of a whitewashed taverna perched high on a hill above a wild and unspoilt bay on the Northern coast of Crete. I had signed up, along with 20 or so others, for a holiday course run by the Alexander Teaching Centre, one of several groupings within the Alexander movement.

I knew very little about the Alexander method before I went, except that several of my musician and actor friends swore by it as a means of expanding their physical performance. I'd joined the course in the sceptical hope of improving my mobility, impaired by a road accident; if it proved useless, I told myself, I'd at least enjoy a fortnight's sun and sea. I ended up a proselytising born-again walker, with a whole new concept of how to get around.

The course teachers didn't make much of my disabilities. They were concerned to release long-standing postural tensions which were preventing me from getting to grips with them. Group sessions on how to relax in everyday movement were secondary to the 'private' lessons in which you lie on a portable table while the teacher, gently touching key points on shoulder, neck or thigh, seemed almost to be willing you through his or her fingers — and with gusts of enthusiastic verbal encouragement — to loosen the interior knots.

The effect was extraordinarily regenerative — and slightly weird. Bernard Shaw, who was an Alexander-enthusiast in his old age, naughtily pin-pointed the mystery which, despite a lot of theorising that has developed round this technique, still seems to me to lie at its heart. 'Mr Alexander,' he wrote, 'invites us to witness a change so small that only he can see it.'

You could tell at once which students had just come from private lessons. They were walking taller and appeared to be treading on air. But there was an aura of unreality about them, as if they were under a spell. There was, in fact, a disarming aura of unreality about the entire fortnight.

Frederick Alexander, the Australian who pioneered the method and brought it to Britain at the turn of the century, was a contemporary, not a follower-on, of Freud. I enjoyed considering the uncomplicated idea that physical stress could cause psychological problems, instead of (or as well as) the more familiar vice-versa.

My fellow-students — performers, aches-and-pains sufferers, fitness addicts and a sprinkling of lonely hearts — were a rather decorous lot; well-heeled and well-bred, most of them; the kind who hate to make a scene. Most of the teachers, too. The woman who

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tentatively raised the problem of sexual inhibition arising from an over-strict childhood was given short shrift. The name of Alexander — held in reverential awe by his disciples, and the fount of many a real or imagined bible-like quotation — was invoked in opposition to such a seditious line of thought.

I didn't buy that one. I don't believe that the great man, by all accounts a rumbustious and unpredictable character, had put any constraints on what to talk about with the eminent performers, artists and writers who flocked to his practice in the 1930s.

Even when a double-booked accommodation crisis (no fault of the organisers) threw everyone into a state of upheaval, the students were frightfully polite about it. They expressed their displeasure in genteel euphemisms and were relieved and grateful when the course leader, a dab hand at plussing the minuses, offered a group lesson in how to dispel one's anger by identifying its physical centres. I didn't buy that one, either.

I value my capacity for anger and, come to that, for the nervous tension which I need before embarking on anything vaguely constructive, whether it's writing this article or baking a cake. But I also value the marvellously effective Alexander approach to physical 'dis-ease' — the gradual retraining of reflexes which is enabling me to put two fingers up at the 'you'll have to learn to live with it' pessimism I encountered in hospital. I haven't yet resolved this contradiction.

It bothered me that the Alexander movement, unlike, say, osteopathy, seemed so exclusively geared to the middle classes. (There isn't a qualified practitioner within 60 miles radius of the industrial-rural area where I live, and very few in the whole of the North.) Yet working-class men and women are, by definition, the ones most likely to suffer from physical strain.

Asking around, I was given explanations ranging from the patronising ('it requires a sustained intellectual effort') to the market forces argument ('at present demand exceeds supply'). The most convincing answer was to do with cost. Unlike osteopathy, it's not a question of a visit or two to put you right. Holiday courses and evening classes can help, but the basic recommendation is for at least 30 private lessons at £10-£15 a time — a formidable commitment for the average wage-earner and impossible for the great unwaged.

Why can't we have it on the National Health? □

Details of holiday courses from Alexander Teaching Centre, 188 Old Street, London EC1V 9BI Tel. 01-250 3038. Nationwide list of practitioners from Society of Teachers of Alexander Technique, 10 London House, 266 Fulham Road, London SW10 9EL.

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TELEVISION

Hugo Williams
Psycho

IF YOU HAVE ever been to a poetry workshop or encounter group or been obliged to watch some modern architect hacking a career for himself out of a loved cityscape you mistakenly imagined belonged to everyone, you will know that it is the need for self-expression — therapy, really — that drives these damaged citizens forward and that it is you and I who suffer when their 'work' procures for them some sort of remission. Humility is what they lack. Erections are what they crave, the taller the better, preferably with pink vinyl knobs on. Such was the underlying common experience of **Architecture at the Crossroads** (BBC2), a sad but caring survey in ten films of those funny hollow structures we used to imagine were for living in. If only such a programme might be the final toilet roll to architecture's unfortunate Modern Movement, but one doubts it somehow.

Doctors of philosophy are obliged by academic tradition to adopt a positive attitude to their subject, even to identify with it. So these well-meaning films employed an upbeat commentator and script to try and mitigate the wretchedness of their subject matter. You felt their despairing conclusions were not altogether intentional. It is not so easy to bury modern architecture under a welter of apologies and optimism as it is, say, abstract expressionism. Modern buildings have a way of standing there in the sunshine, trying to catch your eye, begging to be loved, yet bringing out the worst in you.

The overall import of the series seemed to be that the dreaded Modernism, 'over-planned, over-sanitised' (and over here), has finally been packed away for bad. We were offered gratifying views of Le Corbusier's mammoth wall of flatlets in the south of France, now fallen into decrepitude, high-rise urban jungles in London and Sao Paulo being dynamited, squeaky-clean white concrete piazzas everywhere streaked with stains and graffiti, even the villainous Mies van der Rohe confessing, 'I get up. I sit on the bed. I think, what the hell went wrong?' — adding, in spite of the evidence, 'I showed them what to do!' Exactly, Mies. You should have let them show you. 'A building detaches itself quickly from the architect's intention,' went the commentary by Peter Adam. 'Its real destiny is in its usage, not its design . . .' You had to laugh when the same commentary suggested that a certain giant concentration block in West London had been ruined because 'the council had allowed too many anti-social elements to move in', backing its assertion with the irrefutable evidence of the sight of a dismantled motorbike. 'I am for the idea of the neighbourhood', said a hugely successful Spanish architect controversially, as if the rest of us were for the idea of the gas chamber. One of the most annoying things for architects seems to be that some people will insist on being working-class. 'High-rise building,' went the last film, 'works better for middle-class housing, when there is enough money for maintenance and porterage and people have *chosen* to live there.'

This may be true, but those sticking-up beams and tubs still get in your eye when you go out and no apologies offered. Until recently, that is. For apologetic is definitely the word for what is going on today. It's called 'vernacular' if it's trying to be earnest, 'post-modernist' if it's trying to be winsome. Vernacular architecture tries to go unnoticed by pretending it was there all along; post-modernist stuff gets by by telling jokes, quoting people and wearing funny colours. We all know their sort from parties. I suppose they are better than the kind who start yelling in the kitchen (brutalists) or taking off their clothes (modernists), but we had better not say who they are for fear of nudging them over into one or other of these lunatic fringes.

Jane Lapotaire, appearing on **Did You See** (BBC2), thought there were not enough working-class bathrooms in a film about bathrooms by Peter Greenaway, **26 Bathrooms** (C4). Not counting the Samuel Beckett Memorial bathroom, this was indeed a wincy catalogue of unwarranted middle-class self-cherishingness, but the working-class versions were probably being vandalised due to lack of porterage and maintenance funds.

The '26' was for the letters of the alphabet. 'F is for fishes in the bathroom,' said our guide archly. 'No it isn't,' I thought, but Greenaway is obviously a solitary bather. 'Although I'm quite a puritan I think of mirrors as simply useful for seeing yourself from all angles without corrupting anyone's behaviour.'

I was interested to learn that early plumbing used to be made visible on purpose, often running through dining-rooms in order to reassure people that war was being waged against bad smells, which were thought to carry germs. Since smells are nothing more than airborn particles of the parent substance, this would seem to be still true today.

It was a great pleasure to see our two finest actors, Denholm Elliott and Anna Massey, playing opposite one another for the first time in Anita Brookner's **Hotel du Lac** (BBC2). 'A cold coming I had of it' begins the first letter home to her lover from the recently disgraced Edith Hope, writer of romantic fiction under another 'more thrusting' name. 'I am not drowning, but waving' she writes elsewhere. The phrases say all that needs to be said about the independent but ambiguous character of Edith, in whom the conflicting elements of romance and reality find their natural outcome in restraint, refusal and creativity. 'The facts of life are too terrible for my kind of fiction, where the tortoise always wins the race. In life it is the hare that wins, every time.' The story we are watching is also that of the tortoise and hare, or romantic versus true fiction, the tortoise of romance ultimately yielding to the facts of life as it is lived when her 'catch' Philip Neville (Elliott) is seen at the very last moment creeping from the bedroom of spoilt little rich girl Julia McKenzie. Acting and writing combined in a near-perfect production. □

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Naseem Khan

Kids

THERE IS A STRONG case for arguing that the truly disadvantaged in the arts are not the black communities (four per cent) nor people with disabilities (ten per cent) but young people. About a third of the population is under 21. How many of them have access to the arts, or are encouraged to participate directly themselves?

As far as theatre for young people — the subject of the Arts Council's newly announced policy — is concerned, the commercial world wakes up at Christmas. Shows galore — from pantos to Noddy, from magic to Mr Men — flood the boards. After Christmas, children are put away with the decorations.

Of course, the scene is broader than the commercial one alone. Over the past 20 years or so a new movement has been slowly inching its way forward, its various sections called various names: community theatre, educational theatre, youth theatre, children's theatre and, above all, theatre in education (TiE). Mainstream companies have echoed their methods of working, forming, for instance, small mobile hit teams that go into non-traditional venues (and have learnt not a little from the old Fringe style of touring).

Slowly over the years, the work has brought live theatre to thousands of children (both in and out of school) who would otherwise never have encountered it. TiE has also, in that time, developed its own aesthetic and modes of operation that have nothing to do with Little Noddyland and the excesses of old-style children's theatre. This type of theatre is lively, tough stuff, dealing with issues that range from the directly personal (bullying, prejudice and so on) to broader ones of militarism, racism, the irresponsibilities of power. (For a good bird's eye view of new work, see this week's Newham Festival of Theatre in Education — NIFTIE for short — which I'll be writing about next week*.)

But — and this is the snag — the ventures are isolated, sporadic and ill-funded. Their status — like that of arts for the young in general — is low. Arts columns rarely cover the work. Actors themselves (apart from a committed core which knows what it's all about) tend to keep dark about children's theatre jobs and use them primarily as a means of getting an Equity card. Established writers all too rarely turn their attention to young audiences.

It is a situation that has demanded action for some time. The Arts Council's new policy will not immediately open the public's eyes to the strengths around them (more's the pity) but it forms a thoughtful start and one that has clearly grown out of years of consultation and involvement with the field. Indeed, the proposals developed directly from the highly successful Conference on Theatre and Education held in Warwick in July '84, which proved a watershed in the formulation of TiE policy.

The first aim of the Arts Council's new policy is consistency of provision. Theatre for Young People (TYP, a new blanket term that covers the old categories) exists patchily over the country. Rural areas like East Anglia see very little work; the five-year-old policy of the Welsh Arts Council, on the other hand, has resulted in a company in each of their ten regions. The Arts Council has set itself the task of working with the regional arts associations towards something like the Welsh solution, involving local authorities through challenge funding. Where there is good work, the Arts Council says that it intends to shore it up. Lastly, more money will go to training schemes and to schemes that fund professional involvement like Writers in Residence.

Inevitably some quibbles can be made. Since the Council has also recently promulgated an action plan on ethnic arts, a reflection of that area could have been specifically included. Secondly, the policy emphasis is largely on theatre for young people rather than an equally interesting area, theatre *by* young people. It is, like its adult counterpart, a burgeoning field.

In London, one of the oldest is about to start an ambitious new phase. The Royal Court's department for young people started in 1966 (just after Coventry's Belgrade Theatre set up the first TiE team); the Activists, its youth theatre, began ten years later. Their plays, developed from within the group of 16- to 25-year-olds, have dealt with a range of subjects: the tyranny of team sports, violence towards women, what it's like being disabled. Writers have worked with the group from time to time — Hanif Kureishi is currently in residence — but the view has always been the young people's.

It's an important distinction, says Elyse Dodgson, the Royal Court's new director for its young people's department. Differing approaches abound: youth theatre can work on finished scripts (Shakespeare to Terson) or, if they devise their own material, they might concentrate on so-called 'youth issues'. For Dodgson, it's important that the view is a broad one and that, if the conclusions are not to be piously simple ones (The Importance of Loving One Another), contexts are explored. Dodgson's own project in which a group of young black women recorded memories of immigration — turned ultimately into a play, *Motherland* — is a good example of such an approach. Doubtless the competition initiated and sponsored by Anchor Butter, offering comparatively glittering prizes to plays by youth groups on the theme of 'Heroes', will demonstrate others.

That competition and the Court's new project both help, for what the field needs is to go public. Developed and performed behind the closed doors of schools and youth clubs, TYP is still the subject of extraordinary misconceptions. The more people can see more work, the better it will be. □

**Further information from Sally Mansur on 01-471 6058 or 472 0717.*

Weekend competition

No 2914 **Set by E. O. Parrott**

Wanted, apt, witty (even rude) anagrams of the names of contributors to this journal; including, of course, your good selves. Max. half a dozen anagrams each by 20 March.

No 2911 **Set by Di Dact**

Up-to-date skipping, clapping or ball-throwing songs.

Report **By Rosie Hughes**

You sent in such lovely songs, my dears (one of them even accompanied by a *piano* score, would you credit it?), that I could sob at how little space those horrible column-controllers have allowed us. Ten pounds for each song or extract squeezed in; a hug for those (especially Frank Roots) who haven't made it.

'Yank bid unfriendly!'
Said the member for Henley.
'That man's a twister,'
Said the General Solicitor.
'Good: one big fish gone,'
Said the member for Richmond.
'Don't let them lynch me,'
Cried the member for Finchley.
'Ma'am, don't be nervous,'
Purred the Home Civil Service:
'You did not know;
Leon will go.'

NOEL PETTY

Greeny greeny wo-man
Sitting on the Com-mon,
Didn't want her ba-by
To have an extra HEAD.
Bailiff and her hus-ban
Chucked her in the dust-bin
BANG went the BOMB
And they all dropped DEAD.

GERARD BENSON

Fuzzery battery splattery much,
Kick a yobbo in the crutch.
If he hollers, let him yell;
Beat him up inside a cell.
If you know who went too far,
Never say who's in the car.
If you tell them what you know,
The Super tells you OUT YOU GO.

C. FEVER

Do you like heroin?
Yes I do.
Where can I get some?
No. 22.
If you'd rather buy some C,
Try across the road
At no 23.

V. ERNEST COX

Cecil came a cropper — *he put it about!*
Leon told a whopper — *he got found out!*
Michael's off his chopper — *now we all shout*
Maggie Maggie Maggie — *OUT! OUT! OUT!*

PETER NORMAN

Maggie piddled in Leon's eye,
Maggie said, Gor blimey,
I'm sorry I piddled in your eye,
I didn't know you were behind me.

TOM DONNELLY

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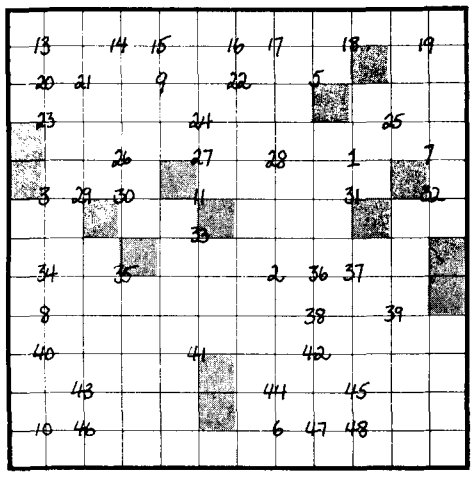
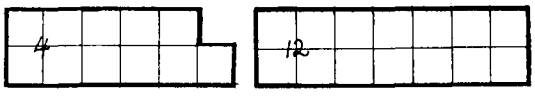
Salamanca 105
'SIGNB' OARDS

PRIZES: £25 cheques for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 105, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 1 April.





The clued answers, all of an even number of letters, are entered in signboard fashion beginning in the top-left square bordering the number reading across or down for half its length and continuing in the same direction in the adjacent squares (see example of title). (32 is in OED.) The unclued answers, whose numbers are misplaced in the grid, all of a special kind to be found in any Whitaker, contain uneven lengths and enter only *slightly* differently. Most of the diagonal of the grid, and the shaded pairs of letters when put together correctly, provide the link which should enable solvers to include the two answers outside the grid with their solution.

1 (7). 2 (7). 3 (7). 4 (11). 5 (10). 6 (8).
7 (15). 8 (12). 9 (7). 10 (11). 11 (8). 12 (12).
13 King, surrounded by water, turning it back? (This is in agreement with the facts of the past) (4)
14 Like an old face, e.g. ours, well-worn (6)
15 Non-juror of mixed nationality, say? (6)
16 This salmon, you see, a boat will get (4)
17 This whiteness with right and left could be globular (6)
18 What's in striking view? (6)
19 Roofs with no middle: you'll see them on building-sites (4)
20 That —— may be used for the water perhaps (4)
21 Displayed misery without a little regret (4)
22 This beast's more musical when described by the devil (8)
23 You'll find some here, nowhere before this time? (6)
24 Grating effect encountered when two princes come together (4)
25 Time to get an edge on the opposition? (4)
26 Newhart's tobacco-man in the New World State (not Dorset) (4)
27 Swelling well, given wine (6)
28 Sympathetic family friend taking one in one time (4)
29 Observation famous German botanist came up with (6)
30 Part painting, part sculpture etc. (4)
31 Luger without pull at extremes of ranges is inaccurate (4)
32 Water lines perhaps? That's corny (4)
33 Triton's small companion, carefully reined (6)
34 These songbirds are false however (6)
35 In cold weather you could get this from not wearing sock, I believe (4)
36 This is not whitened: of course till cured it's so (4)
37 Leads to characters' usual entrances at edge of stage (4)
38 To achieve such cunning's to take practice (4)
39 What old Jewish warrior carries and has for blowing? (6)
40 Like wet fields, say, seen with lustre when the real sun is out (6)
41 Hogg when young, say, had wild garlic (6)
42 Crack a load of glass (4)
43 Here's news about the kangaroo? It's a bit of a nerve (6)
44 Sack could be contained in this (4)
45 General might, leading (4)
46 Spoil, no longer echoed, no longer echoed (4)
47 Sort of vat that's found in the middle of darkroom (4)
48 Wood inlay work giving santir fancy front and excellent back (8)

See p.19 for Solution and Prizewinners to S104.

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MEETINGS

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Informal short talk & questions. 'Transmigration of Animals' 8 p.m. 9 Mar. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL. N10.7

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AGENDA

MOVING FORWARD IN TRADE & AID

David Ward (formerly Campaigns Officer for World Development Movement) and **Reg Freeson MP** for Brent East will initiate a debate.

Kilburn Library, Salusbury Road, NW6.

Monday 10 March 1986. 8-9.30pm.

All welcome.

Organised by Brent, Kensington & Chelsea, North Westminster World Development Groups.

TUES 11 MAR

INAUGURAL MEETING of Windsor/Slough/ Maidenhead ANTI-APARTHEID GROUP. Windsor Community Arts Centre, St Leonards Road, Windsor. 8pm. Ring Jan Fredrickson, Windsor (0753) 865324 for details.

TUES 11 MAR

SOCIETY FOR INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM. Paul Sieghart, Richard Holme, John Griffith and David Yardley will debate European Convention on Human Rights. Central Hall, Westminster, 6.15pm. Admission free.

THURS 13 MAR

STOP THE STRIP SEARCHES. A Public Meeting called by the London Labour Party. Camden Town Hall, Judd Street, NW1. 7.30pm. Wheelchair access. Speakers include: Jo Richardson, Peter Archer, Sarah Roelofs, Richard Balfe and Aingeal Ni Mhiachain.

SAT 15 MAR

CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST MOVEMENT. Tawney Memorial Lecture (free) 10.45am, Lambeth Mission, 1-5 Lambeth Rd, London SE1: Cedric Mayson, "LIBERATION AND THE WINESKIN BUSINESS – A WHITE AFRICAN LOOKS AT CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM IN THE WEST". Enquiries 42 Parliament Hill, London NW3 2TN.

SAT 15 MAR

TRIDENT CAMPAIGNERS DAYSCHOOL - BIRMINGHAM. Workshops on local campaigning, Trident & the Economy, Direct Action and International Links. Speakers include Paul Johns. Organised by CND. Further details from CND, 22-24 Underwood Street, London N1 7JG. 01-250 4010.

MON 17 MAR

SOCIALIST SOCIETY DEBATE: "What if there's a Hung Parliament?" Speakers: Robin Blackburn and Mike Rustin. Old Coffee House, 49 Beak Street, London W1. 8pm. Contributions. Enquiries 01-734 8501.

FRI 21-SAT 22 MAR

WESTERN SAHARA: TEN YEARS OF WAR AND REFUGEES. A CONFERENCE on the conflict in Northwest Africa dealing with Decolonisation, International Law, Women and Refugees, the Polisario Front, International and regional implications of the continuing war with Morocco.
Registration £12.50, £2.50 unwaged. Details: Refugee Studies Programme, Queen Elizabeth House, 21 St. Giles, Oxford. (0865 52952).

COURSE

PART-TIME ART THERAPY COURSE linked with the person-centred counselling approach of Carl Rogers, leading to a Certificate from Crawley College of Technology. Commencing September 1986, three ten week terms, 2 hours per week. Course Tutor: Liesl Silverstone. Venue/info/ application: 17 Cranbourne Gardens, London NW11 0HN. 01-455 8570.

CLOTHING & TEXTILES

Local action in a Worldwide Industry

Conference on Sat. 15th March

Trades Unions speakers from: Philippines, Turkey, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka & Britain.

Also participation from: the Labour Party, Local Authority Workers, Women Working Worldwide, Union of Turkish Workers, West Midlands Clothing Research Centre, and Derry World Development Group.

At L.S.E., Houghton St, London WC2 (nearest undergrounds Holborn and Temple).
10.30am Registration. Admission £5 (includes lunch). Creche & Dependants allowances available. Wheelchair access.

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Sponsored by: Tower Hamlets International Solidarity, Tower Hamlets Trades Council, GLC.

For further info. & prior registration, please write to: THIS, Oxford House, Derbyshire St, London E2 6HG.

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ENGLAND BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR

Saturday 22 March 1986 St Cross College, St Giles, Oxford

Gerald Aylmer	*An Absolute Monarchy in the Making? England Under Charles I*
Charles Webster	*Francis Bacon and the Revolution in Science*
David Norbrook	*The Politics of Tragedy*
Christopher Hill	*Religion, Politics and Archbishop Laud*

Tickets from History Workshop Centre, Ruskin College, Oxford

Waged £10 Unwaged £6 Centre members reduction of £1. Price of ticket includes lunch, tea and coffee.

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Conference on

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11-13 April, 1986

This is an area of law and policy which has received little attention in the UK but is of growing importance. Economic and social pressures towards lower retiring ages and the selection of older works for redundancy or early retirement are in conflict with the severe and increasing difficulties in finding other employment after 45, and demands for protection of older workers against discrimination and compulsory retiring ages.

Conference papers will include: a Report on the Findings of the Lancaster Research Project, Age Discrimination and Sex Discrimination, Age Discrimination in Holland and Other European Jurisdictions, North American Developments in the Field of Age Discrimination, and Practical Problems in the Enforcement of Existing Anti-Discrimination Legislation in the UK.

Speakers will include: Christine Jackson (Head of Research, Equal Opportunities Commission), Stephen Sedley QC, Professor Ian McKenna (University of Lethbridge, Alberta) Dr. Antoine Jacobs (University of Tilburg) and Trevor Buck (School of Law, Lancashire Polytechnic and former research assistant on the Lancaster Age Discrimination Project).

Conference Fees Residential: £50 Non-residential: £26

Registration forms and further details can be obtained from:
The Conference Officer
Age Discrimination Conference
Department of Law
Lonsdale College
University of Lancaster
LANCASTER
LA1 4YN
Telephone: Lancaster (0524) 65201, ext 4859/4057

Registration forms should be returned before Friday 21 March 1986

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MISANTHROPIC MUSINGS : AVOIDING PREGNANCY
NOW TELL ME JADE, WHAT FORM OF CONTRACEPTION ARE YOU USING?
THE ONLY ONE APART FROM CELIBACY WHICH GUARANTEES I'LL HAVE NO MORE BABIES
OH.... AND WHAT MAY THAT BE?
HAVING SEX WITH WOMEN
JANIS GOODMAN

CHESS

NEXT TUESDAY (11 March) the GLC International starts in the Great Eastern Hotel, Liverpool Street. Rounds are 1-6pm daily, excluding rest days on 15, 16, 21 and 26 March, with the final round on 27 March. The field is: Dorfman, Polugaievsky & Vaganian (USSR), Portisch & Ribli (Hungary), Dlugy (USA), Larsen (Denmark), Spassky (France), and Chandler, Mestel, Nunn, Plaskett, Short and Speelman (England). Modern super-tournaments, such as the Bugojno and Tilburg series, are sometimes a little disappointing because they lack any clear top and tail. The result can be an overly matey affair in which the players are too firmly convinced of each other's excellence to go all out for a win.

The line-up for the GLC looks as if it should live up to the high standard set by the marvellous Phillips & Drew/GLC Kings tournaments of 1980, 1982 and 1984. The 1980 event ended in a three-way tie for first place between Miles, Korchnoi and Andersson. This was Nigel Short's first appearance in a really high category tournament. He was outclassed and scored only 2 out of 13. 1982 was memorable for Portisch's blistering start of 6/7, followed by a total collapse in the later rounds. Karpov and Andersson (again) tied for first place, and Short was again last, with 3½/13. In 1984 Karpov took undisputed first place with the fine score of 9/13, in spite of a loss to Torre (who finished last along with Mestel and Nunn). Short was not playing. The only prediction that I dare to hazard is that he won't be at the bottom this time.

By way of a prelude let's look at a couple of striking games from two of the GLC's three ancestors:

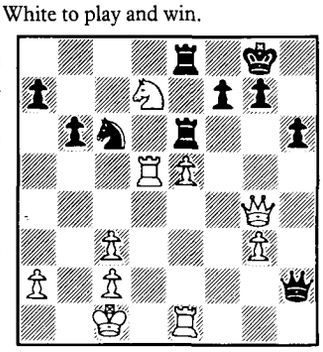
Nunn-Gheorghiu, London 1980. Sicilian Defence. 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 a6 5. c4 Nf6 6, Nc3 d6 7. Be2 Be7 8. 0-0 0-0 9. f4, Qc7 10. Be3 Re8 11. Qe1 Bf8 12. Qh4 b6 13. Rae1 Nbd7 14. Bd3 Bb7 15. Bc2 g6 16. e5! Nh5 17. exd6 Bxd6 18. f5 Ne5! 19. fxe6 fxe6 20. Ne4 Nxc4 21. Nxd6 Qxd6? Although Black is rather weak on the dark squares, he has gained a pawn. But here he should have played 21 . . . Nxd6, to keep in touch with the K-side. **22. Bh6 e5 23. Nf5! Qd5 24. Rf2 Qc5 25. Bd1 Bc8 26. b4! Qxb4 27. Ne7 + Kh8.** The theme is weakness of the back rank: Black cannot capture on e7 because of Rf8 mate. **28. Ref1 Be6 29. Bxh5 Qxe7 30. Rf8 + ! Qxf8.** No choice since 30 . . . Bg8 allows 31. R1f7 Qxh4 32. Bg7 mate. **31. Bxf8 Rxf8 32. Rxf8 + Rxf8 33. Qe7 Rf4 34. g3 1-0.**

Now for the game that wrecked Portisch two years later. **Mestel-Portisch (1982, Round 8)** opened in the same way up to **6. Nc3** and then continued: **6 . . . Bb4 7. Bd3 Nc6 8. Bc2 Qc7 9. 0-0 0-0 10. Kh1 Nxd4 11. Qxd4 Ng4 12. f4 b5.** Black can win the exchange by 12 . . . Bc5 13. Qd3 Nf2+ 14. Rxf2 Bxf2, but after 15. e5 g6 16. Ne4 the consequences are far from appealing. **13. Qd1 Nf6.** The alternative is to risk 13 . . . Bxc3 14. bxc3 Qxc4. Either way, it looks as if 11 . . . Ng4 was not a good idea. **14. e5 Ne8 15. Ne4 Bb7 16. cxb5 axb5 17. Be3 f6 18. exf6 Nxf6 19. Nxf6 + Rxf6 20. Rc1 Bc6 21. Bd4 Rh6 22. Bxg7! Bxg2 +.** Clever, but actually less resilient than 22 . . . Kxg7 23. Qd4 + Kf7 24. Qxb4 Qb7 25. Rf2 Rg8 etc. **23. Kxg2 Qb7 + 24. Rf3 Kxg7 25. Qd4 + Kf7 26. Be4! d5 27. Rg3 Rg8 28. Qe5 Ba5 29. Bf3 Qb8 30. Bh5 + Rhg6.** A bitter necessity: 30 . . . Ke7 31. Rg7 +. **31. Rc6 Qe8 32. Ra6 Qc8 33. Ra7 + 1-0.**

Finally, we have to get down to money. Admission to the GLC International for spectators will be £3 daily, with a concessionary rate of £1 for students, schoolchildren, OAPs and UB40 cardholders. For the players the spur is a first prize of £5,000.

Problem

White to play and win.



a b c d e f g h

Solution

1. Nf6 + ! Rxf6 2. exf6 Rxe1 + 3. Kh2 g5 4. Qc8 + Kh7 5. Qf8 Kg6. Now 6. Qg7 + Kh5 7. Rxg5 + hxg5 8. Qh7 + Kg4 9. Qxh2 is not so easy to win after 9 . . . Re6. **6. g4! 1-0**

The point is 6 . . . Kxf6 7. Rf5 + Ke6 8. Qxf7 + Kd6 9. Rd5 mate.

George Botterill

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QUIZ

1) Who was 'very, very disappointed' last week?
2) Which country last week ordered Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh to leave by 16 March, after he had called it 'a nation in the grip of idiots'?
3) Whom did Deirdre Shannon marry in the Church of Our Lady, St John's Wood, last week?
4) Which MP has been nominated by John Selwyn Gummer for election as a Church Commissioner?
5) Which former MP has been selected as the prospective Alliance candidate for Milton Keynes?
6) Which SDP peer told the House of Lords last week that he had accidentally smoked a joint at a party and found himself 'on a high'?
7) Which Tory peer was fined £90 by Newbury magistrates last week for driving at 95mph on the M4?
8) In which court did Helen Marshall last week win her case that she had been unlawfully discriminated against by being forced to retire at 62?
9) Which London museum last week announced that it will introduce a compulsory admission fee from April 1987?

Answers

1) Ex-President Marcos; 2) Greece; 3) Lord Halisham; 4) Frank Field; 5) Bill Rodgers; 6) Earl Attlee; 7) Lord Soames; 8) European Court of Justice in Luxembourg; 9) Natural History Museum

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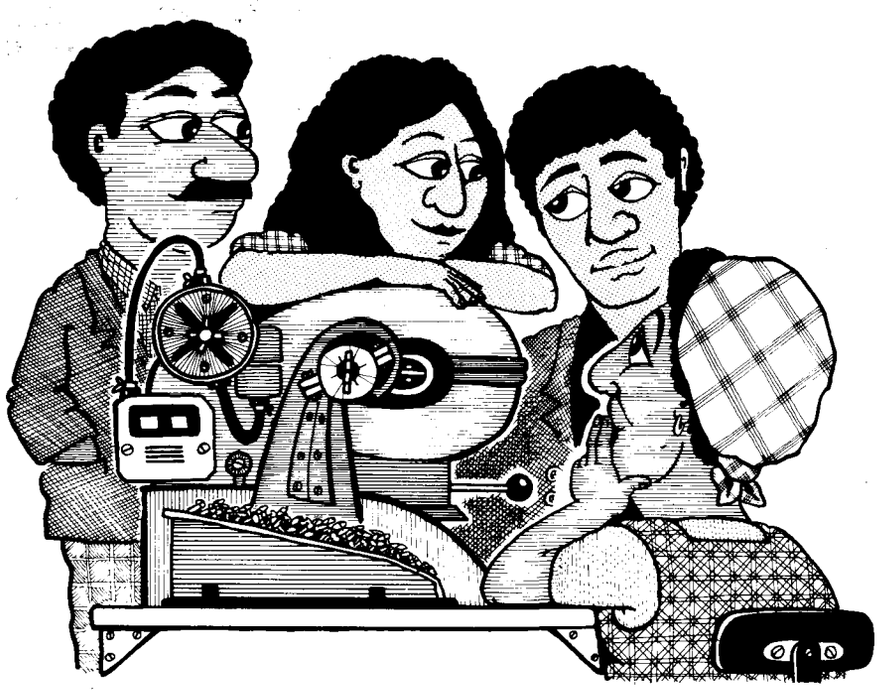

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